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Samples of Students' Writing

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June 1991
English 33
Diploma Examination

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EDUCATION

Samples of Students' Writing

from the

English 33 Diploma Examination

June 1991

Alberta Education
Student Evaluation Branch

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CONTENTS

Acknowledgments v

Section One: Introduction

Purposes 1
Contents 1
Confirming Standards 2
Marking Process 2
Cautions 3

Section Two: Samples of Students' Writing at the Satisfactory (3) Level

General Comments 5
Samples 8
Summary of Elements Found in Satisfactory (3) Papers 34

Section Three: Samples of Students' Writing at the Excellent (5) Level

General Comments 35
Samples 38
Summary of Elements Found in Excellent (5) Papers 72

Section Four: Conclusions and Suggestions for Instruction

Conclusions 73
Suggestions for Instruction 76

Appendix A: English 33 Written-Response Assignments, June 1991 79

Appendix B: English 33 Scoring Guides, June 1991 85

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SECTION ONE
INTRODUCTION

PURPOSES

The first purpose of this booklet is to illustrate and compare two important levels of expectation, or standards, that have been set for diploma examination writing—Satisfactory (3) and Excellent (5). The second purpose is to provide suggestions that we hope will help students to move beyond Satisfactory (3) writing by developing their unrealized potential for writing.

Sample papers from the June 1991 written-response assignment (see Appendix A) form the major part of this booklet. The papers illustrate approaches taken by the students who have produced writing at each of the two levels. These approaches are compared and suggestions to improve student writing strategies for the diploma examination are provided.

CONTENTS

The sample papers are presented by level, in groups of three. The first paper in each group is the one that was used as the exemplar paper for training markers during the June 1991 marking session. The other two papers in each group were chosen, more or less arbitrarily, from those papers receiving consistent scores on most reporting categories (threes or fives). Each paper is accompanied by a specific commentary that discusses the work in terms of the reporting categories used in marking (see Appendix B).

The samples are drawn from the three sections of the examination: Personal Response to Literature (Section I), Functional Writing (Section II), and Response to Visual Communication (Section III). Included is a general commentary about the level of expectation, or standard, under discussion. The general commentaries highlight any common features that exist in the papers.

A summary of the features that emerge at each level is also provided. Comments are made about patterns of approach that students who are writing at each level may have taken. Suggestions are made to teachers for consideration in helping students to produce writing that is beyond the satisfactory level.

Each sample of student writing in this booklet is reproduced as it appeared to the markers; that is, in the student's own handwriting. Because of space limitations, the students' planning and drafting pages have not been included. However, teachers and other readers should note that research has demonstrated a high correlation between planning and successful writing. Consequently, planning for writing should be carefully considered in instructional strategies.

CONFIRMING STANDARDS

Before each marking session begins, a group of English 33 teachers gathers to read a representative sample of examination papers. From these, they select papers that are clearly illustrative of the standards defined by all levels of the scoring criteria. These papers are presented to group leaders and to markers during the training process.

The exemplar papers presented here (the first papers from each group of three) were selected by a group of teachers who acted as standards confirmers for the June 1991 marking session. Each paper was chosen to illustrate the level of expectation, or standard, described as Satisfactory (3) or Excellent (5) in the scoring guides (see Appendix B).

Group leaders, teachers specially selected to chair small groups of markers during the marking session, confirmed that the exemplar papers illustrated the standards described at the Satisfactory (3) and Excellent (5) levels. The exemplar papers were then presented to markers for training purposes at the beginning of the marking of the June 1991 diploma examinations.

MARKING PROCESS

Papers are scored on several different dimensions according to five levels of performance. A complete listing of both the dimensions and the descriptors of each level of performance appears in Appendix B.

Teachers who are selected on the basis of recommendations made by their superintendents do all marking. Selected teachers must be teaching the course during the school year that the examination is administered and must have taught the course for at least two years.

Neither the students' names nor the names of their schools appear on any examination papers. The first hours of the marking session are spent in an intensive training session that includes a review of the scoring descriptors as they relate to the exemplar papers. When marking begins, markers are advised not to mark a paper if they suspect that they recognize its source. They are instructed to disregard the quality of the handwriting in evaluating the papers and to return a paper unmarked if they think the handwriting could influence their judgments. They are also instructed to avoid marking papers whose contents or style call forth any personal biases.

No marks are placed on the examination booklets during the marking process; scores are recorded on separate score sheets. All papers receive three independent readings on a variety of scales (see Appendix B) and the median marks are awarded. Provision is made for a fourth reading if the awarded scores vary to the extent that a student's final grade would be significantly affected.

CAUTIONS

The following cautions should be kept in mind, especially if the information in this booklet is to be used for instructional purposes:

1. **The papers selected represent only a small sample of the possible approaches to each assignment or topic.**
   Even though three papers are presented to illustrate a Satisfactory (3) or Excellent (5) level for each assignment or topic, it must be remembered that these are only three selected from hundreds, or even thousands, of papers at that particular level. Therefore, conclusions about common patterns of approach taken by students at that level must be formed in that context. We hope that the conclusions we have put forward in this booklet will stimulate further thought about the approaches taken and the strategies used by students in their writing.

2. **Neither the assignments reproduced in Appendix A nor the scoring guides presented in Appendix B are meant to limit students to a single organizational or rhetorical approach in completing any diploma examination assignment.**
   Students are free to select and organize their materials in any manner that they feel will best present their ideas. The writing in this booklet illustrates just a few of the many organizational and rhetorical strategies used successfully by students in June 1991.

3. **The sample papers presented in this document must not be used verbatim as models for instructional purposes.**
   Because these papers are sample illustrations only and because they are sample responses to a set topic, students should be cautioned not to memorize the content of any of the sample papers to use when completing classroom assignments or when writing future diploma examinations. It is the *approaches* taken by those achieving at the Excellent (5) level of performance that students should consider emulating, not specific words or ideas.

4. **Readers should consider each student's accomplishments in light of the constraints of the examination situation.**
   Under examination conditions, students are able to prepare writing that we must consider as *first-draft* only. If students were given more time, and access to appropriate resources, we would expect them to produce papers of considerably improved quality.

SECTION TWO
SAMPLES OF STUDENTS' WRITING AT THE SATISFACTORY (3) LEVEL

GENERAL COMMENTS

Student responses at the Satisfactory (3) level for *Part A: Written Response* of the June 1991 English 33 Diploma Examination represent writing that is acceptable for individuals seeking a General High School Diploma. The scoring descriptors (see Appendix B) for each of the writing assignments—Section I: Personal Response to Literature, Section II: Functional Writing, and Section III: Response to Visual Communication—provide specific information about what is considered the Satisfactory (3) level for writing in English 33. While each student's writing style is unique, certain common characteristics among students at this level may be observed.

Section I: Personal Response to Literature

Students earning Satisfactory (3) for Thought and Detail typically address the assignment in a conventional manner and demonstrate that they understand the situation or the experience presented in the reading selection.

Students achieving at this level often retell parts of or all of the story in the reading selection and then go on to describe similar personal experiences that they or their acquaintances have had. This approach fulfils the requirements of the assignment. Their personal experiences are typically written about in a general way; specific and precise information is seldom provided. Many students write about a situation that is similar to the one presented in the reading selection. Other students write about literature they have studied in class, common selections being *King Rat, Ordinary People, Fahrenheit 451,* and *The Taming of the Shrew.* Often, students write about these works in general terms. Some students discuss both a personal experience and literature they have studied; these individuals discuss life and themes from literature in a perfunctory but acceptable way.

Compositions written at the Satisfactory (3) level are often mechanically organized. Typically, details are organized in chronological order as students outline their personal experiences or recount elements from the plot of the literature that they are discussing. Many students begin by mentioning the situation or the experience in the examination passage. This situation or experience is expanded in more detail in the paragraphs that follow and then, typically, a personal situation is discussed. Students who use both a personal experience and an example from literature usually expand these two illustrations in separate paragraphs. There is often a lack of transition linking these examples; instead, students typically list their illustrations in separate paragraphs. The conclusion may begin with the words "In conclusion" and may contain a theme or moral that relates to the original topic.

Stylistic choices used in Satisfactory (3) papers may contain a spark of originality as students attempt to employ particular words, phrases, or sentences for effect. However, these students tend to use generalized terms, perhaps because they do not have ready access to precise and effective words and expressions. They attempt to structure sentences correctly; however, common sentence faults are present, such as run-on sentences and comma splices.

Errors in mechanics and grammar are present at the Satisfactory (3) level, but they do not cause the reader excessive difficulty in understanding the response. Students writing at this level sometimes have difficulty with spelling, and they may resort to less risky and complex wording in their attempt to avoid making mistakes.

Section II: Functional Writing

Students earning Satisfactory (3) for Thought and Detail typically present general information with little precise or specific detail. They tend to rely on details that have already been presented in the assignment. On occasion, they appropriately cite qualifications; however, they tend not to expand upon this information and often do not apply the information specifically to the assignment. Students at this level use an appropriate, polite, and respectful tone. They are able to communicate appropriately with their audience.

Responses are organized in a logical and direct fashion. Students state the purpose of their request, provide information about themselves based upon educational qualifications and past experience, and conclude with a statement about how they can be contacted. Occasionally, students have problems arranging their information and the coherence of their responses may falter.

Students whose writing skills are at the Satisfactory (3) level attempt to select stylistic devices to enhance their compositions, and these attempts are sometimes successful. Occasionally, these students are able to make effective choices. Sometimes errors are made in both mechanical and grammatical conventions, but the writing still communicates its message to the reader.

Section III: Response to Visual Communication

Students earning Satisfactory (3) for Thought and Detail are able to interpret the photograph in a conventional manner. These individuals often derive a moral or maxim from the visual communication, which they then cite as their topic or theme. Elements from the photograph are chosen to reflect the maxim that the student has formulated; however, these elements may be presented in the form of a list that catalogues what the student actually sees in the picture. Some students tell stories about the characters in the picture, inventing elaborate details and situations. A discussion of the choices that the photographer has made may be either explicitly developed or implied by the student.

The maxim or moral that the student derives from the photograph provides the controlling idea for the response; often, this idea is maintained in a mechanical way. Students sometimes introduce the moral in the opening paragraph and may refer to that same idea in the conclusion. In general, these students relate sentences and paragraphs to one another; however, perhaps because students writing at this level have difficulties sorting out the details they wish to include, coherence may falter.

The writing skills employed by students at the Satisfactory (3) level are adequate. These students sometimes attempt to choose words and sentence structures for effect, but they appear to have only a limited selection. Although sentence variety may be used by students writing at this level, most sentences follow the "subject-verb-object" construction. Errors in mechanics and grammar are made; however, most of these errors do not reduce the clarity of the composition. Students functioning at this level often respond briefly to the assignment; they seem unwilling or unable to elaborate upon their ideas.

STUDENT SAMPLE 3A (Personal Response)

General Comments

In this paper, the student alludes to Jack Stettler's "hunger and pain" and then generalizes that people in bad situations should "never give up." The student supports this theme by discussing *Fahrenheit 451* and "Harrison Bergeron," two pieces of literature in which characters face difficult situations. The student expands on Stettler's situation and then reiterates the generalization about people remaining calm. The paper concludes with advice to the reader to "take it calmly and think the situation out clearly." Although the student draws a rather predictable maxim from the reading selection, the student does a credible job of linking the three characters to the maxim and consequently to each other. This response was selected by standards confirmers and presented to group leaders and markers as an exemplar paper representative of Satisfactory (3) in all reporting categories.

Thought and Detail

The student clearly demonstrates an understanding of the reading selection, extracting from it the appropriate but conventional idea that "people should never give up" because "There is always light at the end of a dark tunnel." Support is provided from two pieces of literature; however, this support is general and consists of citing difficult decisions two protagonists have had to make. The student expands on Stettler's situation in some detail and then expresses the opinion that people should "take it calmly and think the situation out clearly."

Organization

The paper is organized in a functional way using a beginning, developing paragraphs, and a conclusion. The introduction establishes that people should not give up; the developing paragraphs discuss characters who have faced problems; and the conclusion supports the idea that when people face "a difficult situation," they must remain calm and "think the situation out clearly." Coherence falters occasionally; for example, in the sentence, "Montag, the main character had to decide to go on as a fireman and burn books, or to go free and do what he pleases, but having to run from the government the rest of his life."

Matters of Choice

Some of the stylistic choices that the student makes are effective. The student chooses the word "rage" rather than "anger" to describe the emotion that most people facing Stettler's situation would have felt. Other words used for effect include "a death threatening or a decision making situation." The student uses appositives correctly—"Jack Stettler, the main character in the story, shows how even when hunger and pain is in the picture people should never give up"; attempts parallel construction—"Montag, the main character, had to decide to go on as a fireman and burn books, or to go free and do what he pleases"; and employs a short sentence for

The story Dry Storm by Paul St. Pierre, allows people to understand that no matter how bad the situation never give up Jack Stettler, the main character in the story, shows how even when hunger and pain is in the picture people should never give up. There is always light at the end of a dark tunnel.

The novel Fahrenheit 451 by Ray Bradbury, is a story on difficult situations. Montag, the main character had to decide to go on as a fireman and burn books, or to go free and do what he pleases, having to run from the government the rest of his life. Also the story "Harrison Bergeron". Harrison had to decide whether life was good enough, with the government telling people how to run their lives, or break free and try to show life could be better.

Jack Stettler, was a man filled with determination. Even being hungry and ~~having~~ a sprained shoulder, Jack knew what he had to do. Giving up was the last thing in Jacks mind.

effect—"Jack Stettler is one man to follow." These choices are uneven, however, and some attempts at stylistic effectiveness do not succeed. Some of the student's sentences lack syntactic control and could have been improved with proofreading and editing; for example, "When Jack reached his fire that he had made in the early morning, After walking for miles, thinking he was getting close to a neighbors; but actually he was just walking in a circle. He did not get mad or angry. He again started walking, and making South towards a neighbors."

Matters of Convention

The student takes risks in this composition and correctly spells some rather complex words, such as "government," "determination," "sprained," "threatening," and "decision." No spelling mistakes are present other than "fusterated." There are occasional errors in mechanics and grammar; for example, faulty subject-verb agreement in "hunger and pain is in the picture" and sentence fragments such as "whether being a death threatening or decision making situation." As well, the student makes errors with apostrophe usage; for example, omitting the apostrophe in "Jacks mind." An error of usage is made by the student in "might of been" where the preposition "of" is used in place of the auxiliary verb "have." This incorrect usage suggests that the student is writing what he or she hears. This combination of effective and correct choices and incorrect choices creates an overall sense of unevenness that could have been improved with careful editing.

When Jack reached his fire that he had made the in the early morning, After walking for miles, thinking he was getting close to a neighbors; but actually he was just walking in a circle. He did not get mad or angry. He again started walking, and making South towards a neighbors.

There is not many people around like Jack Stettler. Most people who might of been in a situation such as Jacks would have been filled with rage. People who are calm in situations are most likely to get out of them. Becoming angry and fusterated never helps anyone. Jack Stettler is one man to follow.

Everyone, Sometime or another is faced with a difficult situation. Whether being a death threatening or a decision making situation. Always take it calmly and think the situation out clearly. Becoming angry will not help the situation get any better

STUDENT SAMPLE 3B (Personal Response)

General Comments

The student retells the story of Jack Stettler's predicament in general terms and agrees "with what Jack had done." The student then describes a difficult personal situation "up in Kanaskis where I had gotten lost." The student elects to wait it out and is "soon found within three hours." The personal incident is dealt with in a general way with no specific details for the reader. The passage concludes with the idea that when people are "determined enough," they should do what they "think is right." The composition is ordered logically as the student first retells the hardships facing Jack Stettler and then recounts a personal story. Diction and sentence structures are unevenly controlled, and errors in mechanics and grammar are present. In spite of its unevenness, the response is representative of Satisfactory (3) in most reporting categories.

Thought and Detail

Throughout this composition, the student sustains a credible understanding of Jack Stettler's situation. By recounting the scenario in "Dry Storm," the student establishes the theme that Stettler had to help himself "because if he had decided to wait, no body would of found him." The student offers an opinion about the situation and decides that Stettler has "great courage and determination of not getting mad and showing any anger." The personal incident about being "left in the woods" is briefly mentioned but no details about the incident, other than the outcome, are provided. The student addresses the assignment in a very general way.

Organization

The student has composed a beginning that introduces the topic of Stettler's "great courage and determination," a middle that recounts both the situation in which Stettler finds himself as well as a personal example about being lost in the woods, and a conclusion that provides a generalization about life: "you should do what you think is right." This composition is very mechanically constructed. Sentences are generally linked together. However, when the student attempts parallel structures, coherence falters; for example, "After finding the Ildash, which is a swamp region, with meadow and forest, he felt that he would be able to find Frenchie's ranch, which was his neighbor."

Matters of Choice

On occasion, the student chooses words and constructions that are effective; for example, the interrupted movement in "Then after four hours of walking he ended up right where he left off, not gaining any ground at all." As well, the description of Stettler as a man who shows "great courage and determination" is effective. However, there are awkward and potentially redundant wordings, such as "In my own experience I as well have also faced difficult situations, in which they are similiar to

IN THE EXCERPT "DRY STORM," WRITTEN BY PAUL ST. PIERRE, JACK STETTLER RUNS INTO A DIFFICULT SITUATION. HIS HORSE FELL ON HIM, LEAVING HIM WITH A BROKEN SHOULDER, AND A STRAINED ANKLE. JACK STETTLER, THEN HAD TO MAKE A DECISION ON WHETHER OR NOT HE WAS GOING TO STAY AND WAIT FOR HELP, OR GO FOR HELP HIMSELF. JACK THEN GOES FOR HELP, SHOWING GREAT COURAGE AND DETERMINATION. IN MY OWN OPINION I AGREE WITH WHAT JACK HAD DONE, BECAUSE IF HE HAD DECIDED TO WAIT, NO BODY WOULD OF FOUND HIM.

IN THE EXCERPT " DRY STORM," JACK STETTLER IS A WOUNDED MAN. HE IS SERIOUS IN THAT HE SHOWS GREAT COURAGE AND DETERMINATION TO GET SOME HELP. AFTER FINDING THE MUDHEN, WHICH IS A SWAMP REGION, WITH MEADOW AND FOREST, HE FELT THAT HE WOULD BE ABLE TO FIND FRENCHIES RANCH, WHICH WAS HIS NEIGHBOR. AFTER WALKING FOR HOURS HE KNEW THAT HIS BODY SUPPLY OF FAT HAD QUICKLY BEEN BURNING AWAY. THEN AFTER FOUR HOURS OF WALKING HE ENDED UP RIGHT WHERE HE LEFT OFF, NOT GAINING ANY GROUND AT ALL. JACK THEN STARTED OFF AGAIN, STATING "I'LL BE DAMNED," PERCEIVING SOUTH AGAIN. THIS SHOW GREAT COURAGE AND DETERMINATION OF NOT GETTING MAD AND SHOWING ANGER

Jack Stettlers." The student chooses words unevenly and uses ineffective constructions. The generalization about life that "if you are determined enough in both situations, you should do what you think is right" is less effective than it might have been because it is overgeneralized and over-uses the second person pronoun. In this writing, the student uses patterns that are more appropriate in informal speech.

Matters of Convention

This composition has strengths and weaknesses in mechanics. Several sentences are almost free from error; for example, "In the excerpt 'Dry Storm,' written by Paul St. Pierre, Jack Stettler runs into a difficult situation. His horse fell on him, leaving him with a broken shoulder, and a sprained ankle." However, this student has difficulty with numerous mechanical and grammatical conventions. Phrases such as "Frenchies Ranch" indicate a problem with apostrophe usage. As well, the student uses tense inconsistently, switching from past to present when recounting Stettler's situation. Spelling also poses some difficulty: the student writes "no body" for "nobody," "percieving" for "perceiving," and "Kanaskis" for "Kananaskis." As in the previous paper, the preposition "of" is used in place of the auxiliary verb "have" in "would of found." This transfer of what is heard to what is written seems to be a common pattern of approach in writing at this level. Students need to be made aware that the conventions of writing are different from, and more rigid than, conventions of speech. Another area of difficulty is wording that occasionally confuses the reader: "In conclusion, in both situations mine and Jack's, were were both faced with some serious situations." The errors that are present sometimes reduce the clarity of the composition.

IN MY OWN EXPERIENCE. I AS WELL HAVE ALSO FACED DIFFICULT SITUATIONS, IN WHICH THEY ARE SIMILIAR TO JACK STETTLERS. I AS WELL WAS LEFT IN THE WOODS, WHERE I GOT LOST. IT WAS UP IN KANASKIS WHERE I HAD GOTTEN LOST, ~~THINKING~~ WITH MY FRIENDS WHO IN WHICH I WAS PLAING WITH. I WAS THINKING ~~THINKING~~ OR HOPING THAT SOMEONE WOULD COME AND FIND ME. I FELT THAT I WAS IN A FAIRLY POPULAR AREA, SO I EVENTUALLY WAITED, AND WAS SOON FOUND WITHIN THREE HOURS

IN CONCLUSION, IN BOTH SITUATIONS MINE AND JACKS, ~~IT WAS~~ WERE WERE BOTH FACED WITH SOME SERIOUS SITUATIONS. I FEEL THAT IF YOU ARE DETERMINED ENOUGH IN BOTH SITUATIONS, YOU SHOULD DO WHAT YOU THINK IS RIGHT.

STUDENT SAMPLE 3C (Personal Response)

General Comments

The student suggests using a step-by-step approach when faced with a difficult situation. The student establishes the idea that "People in difficult situations must decide whether" they are "doing the best thing." Jack Stettler's situation is referred to briefly. The student then uses an example from the novel *Fahrenheit 451* involving the character Montag, whom the student describes as a person who has "had to make those decisions" about killing another man "in order to stay alive." The second idea the student develops debates whether choosing an action in a difficult situation is "the best thing to do." Stettler's predicament in the excerpt and Montag's situation in the novel are mentioned briefly, as is the choice facing the narrator in Robert Frost's poem "The Road Not Taken." The conclusion reiterates the theme that people in difficult situations must "choose the right thing." A consistent theme is developed throughout the passage; however, the student has a number of problems with word choice and sentence structure, and with matters of convention. The student tries to make specific and thoughtful points but has difficulty communicating them correctly. In spite of these problems, the response is representative of Satisfactory (3) in most reporting categories.

Thought and Detail

The student provides general support for the theme that "People in difficult situations must decide whether there doing the best thing" by first referring to Stettler. The idea that people must decide if "there going to hurt themselves or someone else" is put forth, applied to Stettler's situation, and then dismissed because he is "already hurt, and may not be found for days." Montag, the protagonist in the novel *Fahrenheit 451*, is compared with Stettler and portrayed as an individual who has to face an even more difficult situation when he is instructed to "start his own house on fire" and tries to kill Beatty. The support that is provided from this novel to promote the theme is functional but not elaborate. The connection of the theme to the second piece of literature, Frost's poem, is developed minimally and deals only with the choice faced by the speaker in the poem of taking a well-worn road or the route less travelled.

Organization

The student uses a step-by-step approach to organization by first citing Jack Stettler's situation, moving on to discuss the protagonist in a novel, going back to Stettler, and then briefly mentioning a character in a poem. The conclusion repeats the theme that is presented in the introduction. The student takes a mechanical and generally coherent approach to the assignment; however, coherence falters when the student makes the transition from discussing Stettler's situation to that in the novel. This awkward transition bespeaks a lack of awareness of audience. This student appears to be grappling with a unifying idea that he or she does not have under control. The opening of the student's response—"In a situation like that"—also suggests that this student could profit by becoming more aware of audience.

In a situation like that Stettler could have waited for days or more before help, instead took a risk of trying to find help. He never knew where he was going since he circled back. People in difficult situations must decide ~~on~~ whether there doing the best thing. They must consider if there going to hurt someone, if its the best thing to do, and what will be the ~~outcome~~ outcome of the situation.

Deciding if there going to hurt themselves or someone else should be considered first. Stettler never had a really choice to make, since he was already hurt, and may not be found for days or more. In the novel Farenheit 451, Montag was in a very difficult situation. He never knew if he should read the books or not, if he should stay a fireman, and keep burning books and people if necessary. When Beatty made Montag start his own house on fire, Montag then had to make the decision to kill Beatty or be killed himself. When Montag killed Beatty he then had to kill the hound. After all that he was in another difficult situation, he had everyone out looking for him. Montag got away from everyone but had to hide out in the forest. In that difficult situation Montag had to make those decisions in order to stay alive.

Matters of Choice

The student occasionally attempts to use words and structures for effect in this composition. For example, parallelism is attempted in the sentence "They must consider if there going to hurt someone, if its the best thing to do, and what will be the outcome of the situation." Sentence variety is also attempted. The complex sentence "When Beatty made Montag start his own house on fire, Montag then had to make the decission to kill Beatty or be killed himself" is structured correctly, as is the sentence "In the novel *Farenheit 451*, Montag was in a very difficult situation." The student also uses interrupted movement effectively in "Stettler if he would of stayed may have been rescued" even though this sentence contains errors in punctuation and grammar. Generalized wordings and colloquial expressions are used throughout; for example, "He could sort of walk on his sprained leg." The student makes an attempt to choose an appropriate style but is not in complete control of diction and syntax.

Matters of Convention

Common spelling and grammatical errors as well as errors in usage are present in this writing; they occasionally interfere with the message that is being communicated. The student uses "there" for "they're," "its" for "it's," "know ones" for "no one's," and "would of" for "would have." As in the previous two papers, the student hears "would of" as everyday speech and writes that instead of "would have." Spelling mistakes such as "decission," "Farenheit," and "woren" are common errors for students who do not have a facility for writing, particularly when much is being attempted, as it is in this sample paper.

Another thing people are going to face in a difficult situation is, is it the best thing to do. Again you come back to Stettler and should he have waited for help or find help on his own. He could sort of walk on his sprained leg, but moving could have made it worse and been stranded further away. Also brings us back to Montag in Farenheit 451, should he just done his job burning books, and never take or read one. The poem the road not taken could also fit in here. The guy had a choice of a road thats been well worn down or taken the road know ones been down.

The outcome of the decision while in a difficult situation must also be thought of. Stettler if he would of stayed may have been rescued, but decided to try for help. Since he tryed for help he just wound up at the same place. Montags outcome was he had to still hideout from everyone, but met up with others who did the same as he did.

I think all these points must be considered by a person in a difficult situation, and that they choose the right things.

STUDENT SAMPLE 3A (Functional Writing)

General Comments

Essential information is provided in this letter of application. The student states the purpose of the letter immediately—"I would like to apply for a full time position as a counter person"—and then provides information about his or her educational background. As well, the student outlines two previously held jobs as a salesclerk and a receptionist, and expresses an interest in "working with and meeting new people." The student concludes the letter by mentioning an enclosed résumé and by providing a telephone number. The polite tone that is employed is appropriate for the assignment. This response was chosen by standards confirmers and presented to markers as an exemplar paper representative of Satisfactory (3) in all reporting categories.

Thought and Detail

Sufficient information is presented by this student to fulfil the purpose of the assignment. However, supporting details that would have enhanced his or her purpose are not included: no information is given about the "computer and typing courses" that the student completed, and relevant details about the student's Grade 12 program are omitted. Although the salesclerking job and "part time job answering phones and taking messages" are cited, the writer does not elaborate. The tone of the writing is suitable by being both polite and respectful: "I believe that with my experience that I qualify and could be an asset to your company."

Organization

The letter is organized in an appropriate way. The first paragraph states the purpose of the letter, the second paragraph provides supporting information, and the third paragraph refers to additional information and possible interview. In the second paragraph, the student provides a list of personal information; however, there is a lack of elaboration and few transitions are provided between ideas.

Writing Skills

Few errors appear in this response. Some words and structures, such as "could be an asset to your company," are selected for effect and add a genuine voice and flavor. However, the student takes little risk with word choice and sentence structure. Sentences are relatively short: "I have my grade 12." Sentence variety is not employed; virtually every sentence begins with the word "I," and the words "I have" are often repeated.

609 Nalcreek Drive
Nalwen, Alberta
T9R 3P3

June 7, 1991

Ms. Cynthia Melnyk
Personnel Manager, U-Save Rent-a-Car
P.O. Box 1172
Nalwen, Alberta
T5J 4T3

Dear Ms. Melnyk:

I would like to apply for a full time position as a counter person as advertised in the "Nalwen News" dated June 6, 1991. I believe that with my experience that I qualify and could be an asset to your company.

I have taken both computer and typing courses at Nalwen Vocational College. I have my grade 12. I have worked as a sales clerk and once held a part time job answering phones and taking messages. I enjoy working with and meeting new people.

I have enclosed my resume and I can be reached at 555-2212. I can be made available for an interview at your convenience. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely

Pat Jones

STUDENT SAMPLE 3B (Functional Writing)

General Comments

The student addresses the purpose of the assignment in a generalized way. The student alludes to the "Computer 30" and the "U of A Bookkeeping and Accounting" courses and briefly to accounting experience, but no elaborating details are provided. The student then indicates where he or she can be contacted for further information. This response is organized in a predictable but acceptable way that fulfils the purpose of the assignment. The student's response is brief and few errors are made. This response is representative of Satisfactory (3) in most reporting categories.

Thought and Detail

The student demonstrates an awareness of the audience when he or she states "I am a hard worker, and qualified for the job." Information is provided that supports the student's application: "I have my Computer 30. I've taken three years in U of A Bookkeeping and Accounting. I have experience in the work field." Although this individual refers to a high school course and creates additional qualifications from postsecondary education, the information is not expanded upon with specific details. The tone is both businesslike and direct as demonstrated in the sentence "If you have any further questions you can call me at home 348-6678 after 6:00 pm." The response is relatively short.

Organization

The purpose of the letter is given in a general way in the introductory paragraph. The student first applies for the position of "Bookkeeping/ Accounting Person" and mentions where and when the position was advertised. The details "Computer 30," "Bookkeeping and Accounting," and "experience in the work field" are appropriately mentioned and relate to the job for which the student is applying. The conclusion is perfunctory, yet provides information about how to reach the student. Although the student does not elaborate, sentences are related logically and coherently: the student states an interest in the advertised job, lists qualifications, and provides information about how the prospective employer can make contact.

Writing Skills

The student attempts to structure sentences for effect; for example, the sentence "I am a hard worker, and qualified for the job" is emphatic. The student has difficulty with various conventions. Occasional spelling errors are made: "Accountent" for "Accountant". The student also misuses capitalization—"Application," "Bookkeeping/Accounting,"—and uses sentence fragments such as "L.N. Accounting Company for two years as an Accountent." There is also a fault in verb tense: "I seen." Although the clarity of communication is not reduced significantly because of these errors, their presence may detract from the letter's purpose.

609 Nalcreek Drive
Nalwen, Alberta
T9R 3P3

June 7, 1991

Ms. Cynthia Melnyk
Personnel Manager, U-Save Rent-a-Car
P.O. Box 1172
Nalwen, Alberta
T5J 4T3

Dear Ms. Melnyk:

I am writing you this letter of Application, for the job I seen in the Nalwen News on June 6, 1991. The position I'm interested in is the Bookkeeping/Accounting person.

I am a hard worker, and qualified for the job. I have my computer 30. I've taken three years in U of A Bookkeeping and Accounting. I have experience in the work field. I.D. Accounting Company for two years as an Accountant.

If you have any further questions you can call me at home 348-6678 after 6:00 pm. Thank-you for you time.

Yours truly
Pat Jones

STUDENT SAMPLE 3C (Functional Writing)

General Comments

The student provides a generalized response to the assignment. The introduction refers to the advertisement and clearly states the student's interest in "the full time position of Car Valet." Both general information, "working out on the farm," and specific information, learning "to drive a standard car and truck," are provided. The student indicates in the conclusion where he or she can be contacted. The tone is respectful and appropriate, except perhaps for the word "noticed" in the opening sentence. The request is clear and to the point. This response is representative of Satisfactory (3) in most reporting categories.

Thought and Detail

Although the student presents general information about "working out on the farm," details about being unsupervised on a job that demands "my fullest attention at all times" provide specificity. Details provided about the student's qualifications for the advertised job are basic rather than precise. That the work was "never supervised" effectively suggests that the student is conscientious and hard-working and could be placed in a position of trust by the prospective employer. The information about driving "a standard car and truck" does relate well to the sought-after car valet's job, and the prospective employer would likely appreciate knowing that the student has "never once had a speeding ticket or accident." This generalized information fulfils the purpose of the assignment in a polite and businesslike way.

Organization

Ideas are organized clearly and move from a functional introduction to basic details about the student's experience, to concluding information about references and about how to make contact. This information is presented in a straightforward way with little embellishment, but it is relevant and to the point.

Writing Skills

An occasional attempt is made to structure a sentence for emphasis: "In the recent years I have learned to drive a standard car and truck therefore I would have no trouble driving the automobiles." The student combines ideas into compound sentences and attempts to make stylistic choices; for example, "My work was never supervised and it demanded my fullest attention at all times." Relatively few errors appear in this short response. Those that are present, such as "If you would like more information on myself" and "Your's Truly," jar the reader rather than seriously reduce the clarity of the composition.

609 Nalcreek Drive
Nalwen, Alberta
T9R 3P3

June 7, 1991

Ms. Cynthia Melnyk
Personnel Manager, U-Save Rent-a-Car
P.O. Box 1172
Nalwen, Alberta
T5J 4T3

Dear Ms. Melnyk:

I noticed your "Help Wanted" ad in the Thursday June 6, 1991 edition of the Nawlen News. I am very interested in the full time position of Car Valet.

I have been out of school for three year and I have been working out on the farm ever since my work was never supervised and it demanded my fullest attention at all times.

In the recent years I have learned to drive a standard car and truck therefore I would have no trouble driving the automobiles. In the five years I have been driving, I never once had a speeding ticket or accident.

If you would like more information on myself, or would like to have some references please contact me at 666-6666

Yours Truly

Pat Jones

PAT JONES

STUDENT SAMPLE 3A (Visual Communication)

General Comments

The student interprets the elements in the photograph in a rather general manner and provides a reasonable interpretation. The student suggests that the family is poor and that "the two boys that are playing violins" can do something to make their lives better, a suggestion that is reinforced by the title "Rags to Riches." The student expresses the opinion that one boy has an "eager look on his face" and appears to be "very serious about the music." This response was selected by standards confirmers and presented to group leaders and markers as an exemplar paper representative of Satisfactory (3) in all reporting categories.

Thought and Detail

The student notes that the people in the photograph are poor but believes that the two boys have a chance to make "somthing better out of life" through their violin music. Basic details are provided about one of the boys. The student states that the boy appears to be both "serious" and "eager" about his music. The mother and the baby are not discussed. The student concludes that "This is another case of rages to riches" and that the boys "will go far" if "they play good enough."

Organization

The controlling idea that people can make their lives better even though they live "in a very rundown awful area" is sustained throughout the composition. Sentences and paragraphs are related through the consistent development of the poverty-to-wealth theme. A problem with coherence is evident in the sentences "The two boys are playing very high class instruments which leads the person viewing the picture to see that the two boys want somthing better out of life. The one boy that you can see all of seems to be very serious about the music."

Writing Skills

Occasionally, word choice and sentence structures are effective. The student states that one of the boys is serious about his music and that this is demonstrated through the "eager look on his face and the very upright stance the boy is taking." The student attempts to make stylistic choices, but these selections are not always successful. The student combines adverbs and adjectives effectively to modify a noun—"a very rundown awful area"—but repeats the adverb "very" excessively in the paragraphs that follow. The student makes an apostrophe error—"the boys eager look"—as well as a few "slips of the pen": "somthing," "rages"; both these words are written correctly in other places. These errors occasionally reduce the clarity of communication.

Rags to Riches.

The photo is of a very poor family that lives in a very rundown old house, that doesn't appear to be very clean and well kept, as there is garbage all over the table in the picture.

The photographer is trying to communicate ~~that~~ through the two boys that are playing violins that even though you may live in a very rundown awful area you can still do something to make your life better. The two boys are playing a very high class instruments which leads the person viewing the picture to see that these two boys want something better out of life. The one boy that you can see all of seems to be very serious about the music. This is proved by noticing the boys eg eager look on his face and the very upright stance the boy is taking.

This is another case of rages to riches. The two boys live in a rough place and they want to make it big playing their instrument. They know that if they play good enough they will go far, and make some real money.

STUDENT SAMPLE 3B (Visual Communication)

General Comments

The student demonstrates a general understanding of the photograph and from it derives the moral that all children need the "chance to become responsible, dedicated people." The discussion shifts from speculation about the mother, to speculation about the children, to a fairly thorough description of the setting, and returns to speculation about the children. The student conjectures that the children are "very content with what they have." Attempts are made to use effective writing skills in this rather brief response. This response is representative of Satisfactory (3) in most reporting categories.

Thought and Detail

The photograph is interpreted as a maxim: "even though your family may be poor, give your children a chance to become responsible, dedicated people." The student speculates that "the mother hopes her children become famous musicians" and that the boys can probably play all the instruments in the room. Very specific elements in the photograph are used to support the idea that the room "looks very run down." This information is given to support the first part of the maxim, "your family may be poor," and then is contrasted in the last two sentences of the response with the observation that, in spite of their poverty, the children appear to be content.

Organization

The response is structured by stating a general idea about giving children a chance, listing elements in the photograph that demonstrate impoverished living conditions, and making conjectures about those elements. The controlling idea that the family is poor but content is mechanically maintained. Sentences are related in a general way.

Writing Skills

The student combines simple sentences such as "Their living environment doesn't seem to be the best" with relatively complex sentences such as "To me I believe the photographer is trying to communicate the idea that, even though your family may be poor, give your children a chance to become responsible, dedicated people" and "They have a wire holding the light fixture in place and it seems a window has been boarded up." The student takes risks in this composition and spells difficult words correctly: "responsible," "dedicated," "musicians," "instruments," and "environment." Minor stylistic problems such as the redundancy in "To me I believe" are present and suggest that the student's writing could have profited from careful editing.

To me I believe the photographer is trying to communicate the idea that, even though your family may be poor, give your children a chance to become responsible, dedicated people.

In the picture the mother is sitting in a chair feeding her baby while listening to her other children playing the violins. It seems in this picture that the mother hopes her children become famous musicians. They have all sorts of instruments and probably know how to play everyone of them.

Their living environment doesn't seem to be the best. The room they are in looks very run down. The top right corner of the picture shows the plaster has come off of the wall. They have a wire holding the light fixture in place, and it seems a window has been boarded up. But it doesn't seem to bother any of the children. They seem very content with what they have.

STUDENT SAMPLE 3C (Visual Communication)

General Comments

This response begins with the generalization that opportunities are uncommon, that they "do not always come easy" and are contingent upon "where you live and how much money you have." Elements in the photograph are used as support; however, this response relies heavily upon narrative elements as the student creates a story to accompany the photograph. The effects that the photographer has created are mentioned, and the response concludes with a moral about using opportunities. The student's style is inconsistent; some elements suggest strength on the part of the writer and some elements suggest weakness. The response is representative of Satisfactory (3) in most reporting categories.

Thought and Detail

The student combines a credible interpretation of the photograph with speculation based loosely on selected details; for example, the setting is seen as "a village somewhere in Mexico," the mother is seen as "waiting for the father to come back," and the boys are seen as having obtained "a book to teach them how to play because they cannot afford lessons." The interplay of light and darkness in the photograph is noticed by the student in the comment that the photographer is "trying to portray the greyish gloomy effect of the house except for the sun coming through the door symbolizing that there is much more opportunity out in the world." These insights are uneven, however; in another part of the response, the student states "It is hot where they live that is why they have no door."

Organization

A controlling idea is sustained throughout this response. The student begins with the judgment that "opportunities do not always come easy" and then creates a story about the family's poverty, stating that the boys "are very smart for taking advantage of their opportunities." The conclusion provides the moral that "Everyone deserves at least one opportunity in their life and what you do and how you use that opportunity is up to you." Sentences are generally related as the moral is expanded; however, coherence falters somewhat when the student introduces narrative elements.

Sometimes opportunities do not always come easy. In different parts of the world there are different opportunities according to where you live and how much money you have.

In the visual picture the boys have got a rare opportunity. They are practicing the violins that they have in order to become good and make lots of money. They live in a village somewhere in mexico. They are quite poor because they have barely no furniture and everywhere is hard, no carpet. It is hot where they live that is why they have no door. The mother is sitting waiting for the father to come back while She feeds the baby. There is many other instruments in which they have that the boys are also trying to learn. They would be able to get into a good school if they are able to play the instruments. They do not have many toys because they are poor so they spend their time practicing. They have some how got a book to teach them how to play because they cannot afford lessons. They want to be good at something and have sort of a trade to take them through life So they do not have to end up living

Writing Skills

Occasionally, sentence structures are utilized for effect; for example, the cumulative effect of the loose sentence "The mother is sitting waiting for the father to come back while she feeds the baby" helps to create an image in the mind of the reader. Effective phrases such as "rare opportunity," "quite poor," and "greyish gloomy effect" are combined with ineffective choices such as "become good and make lots of money," "everywhere is hard," "sort of a trade," and "everything around them of their enviorment." This inconsistency, which is fairly typical of writing at this level, suggests that the student is still somewhat uncomfortable with written expression, but that he or she has strengths that can be built upon. This same inconsistency can be seen in the syntactic structures the student uses. The effective sentence about the mother waiting for the father is immediately followed by a sentence that demonstrates grammatical and syntactic irregularity: "There is many other insterments in which they have that the boys are also trying to learn." This awkwardness, and other errors such as "insterment" for "instrument" and "enviorment" for "environment," suggest that the student is writing language as it is heard.

like they do now. They are very smart for taking advantage of their opportunities so they can make it in life. The photographer has taken the picture to try and show everything around them of their enviorment. He is also trying to portray the greyish gloomy effect of the house except for the sun coming through the door symbolizing that there is much more opportunity out in the world.

When opportunities arise that are to your advantage it is best that you use them to the best of your ability. Everyone deserves at least one opportunity in their life and what you do and how you use that opportunity is up to you.

SUMMARY OF ELEMENTS FOUND IN SATISFACTORY (3) PAPERS

The English 33 Diploma Examination *Part A: Written Response* papers that are representative of the Satisfactory (3) level contain writing that is adequate when produced in a time-specific examination context by general diploma students. These papers exhibit a number of characteristics that distinguish them as Satisfactory (3) responses.

The students understand what is expected of them but tend to respond to the assignment in a generalized, conventional way, as a "springboard" for writing. These students typically make use of information from the wording of the assignment or from details provided by the assignment. Opinions expressed in the Personal and Visual responses, though sincere in tone and appropriate in terms of the assignment, are often in the form of a platitude or moral. Precise details or illustrations are seldom provided as support for opinions. It is almost as though the universal "truth" of the platitude or moral is seen by the student as being self-evident and not requiring specific support. These students seem either unwilling or unable to provide specific details that would clarify and enliven their responses.

Students at the Satisfactory (3) level are aware of the importance of organization. They employ introductions, developing paragraphs, and conclusions. However, this organization is often mechanically maintained; for example, these students cite a topic statement in the opening paragraph, develop this topic with generalized examples or ideas, and conclude by restating the topic presented in the introduction. Students at this level may have problems with coherence; their sentences and paragraphs do not always flow effectively from idea to idea and, at times, the reader is left to make the connections.

Writing skills demonstrated by students at the Satisfactory (3) level are inconsistent, revealing both strengths and weaknesses. Variety in word choices and sentence structures is demonstrated on occasion, but effectiveness of diction and syntax is not always sustained. Generally, few risks are taken in using challenging, precise diction and complex sentence structures, and students at this level often transcribe into writing the images that their "mind's ear" have remembered. However, spelling is generally correct and clarity is not reduced by the presence of some errors. Some students at the Satisfactory (3) level do have problems with spelling and with grammatical constructions, but these students often attempt to write lengthier, more complex responses that, overall, merit being assessed at the Satisfactory (3) level.

In summary, writing representative of the Satisfactory (3) level usually shows an understanding of the assignment and is often sincere in tone. However, it tends to be generalized, mechanically organized, and dependent on conventional ideas. It may contain some errors in mechanics and grammar. Responses at this level are representative of the acceptable standard for writing on the diploma examination. It must be remembered, however, that this writing should be considered first-draft writing, given the circumstances under which the students are writing.

SECTION THREE
SAMPLES OF STUDENTS' WRITING AT THE EXCELLENT (5) LEVEL

GENERAL COMMENTS

Student responses at the Excellent (5) level for *Part A: Written Response* of the June 1991 English 33 Diploma Examination represent writing that is exceptionally strong for individuals seeking a General High School Diploma upon graduation. The scoring descriptors (see Appendix B) for each of the writing assignments—Section I: Personal Response to Literature, Section II: Functional Writing, and Section III: Response to Visual Communication—provide specific information about what is considered the excellent level for writing in English 33. While each student's writing style is unique, certain common characteristics among students at this level may be observed.

Section I: Personal Response to Literature

Students earning Excellent (5) for Thought and Detail typically address the assignment in a very specific and detailed manner. Most students writing at this level demonstrate not only that they understand the situation or experience presented in the reading selection, but also that they are able to react to this situation or experience in a perceptive way.

Some students achieving at this level recap a few of the details from the reading selection and then quickly move on to the precise and thoughtfully chosen incident that they wish to relate. These students may write about a situation that closely parallels the one in the assignment, or they may employ a wider interpretation of the topic and relate an incident that is quite removed from the prompt. Some discuss relevant literature. Students at this level are comfortable with literature that they have studied in the classroom, and they are able to use specific details from these stories to elaborate upon their chosen themes. Some students discuss both personal experience and literature; these individuals discuss life and themes from literature in a discerning way and are usually able to construct relevant parallels. These Excellent (5) compositions are typically lengthy but are not redundant.

Compositions written at the Excellent (5) level are organized in a clear and coherent fashion. Students who begin by mentioning the situation or experience in the reading selection, do so in such a way as to provide direction for the reader and to appeal to the reader's interest. If a personal anecdote is related, it is expanded in sentences that flow to a logical conclusion. Students at this level who refer to additional literary selections effectively relate the reading selection in the examination to the literature that they wish to discuss. Students who discuss both personal experience and works of literature sometimes develop the two illustrations in separate paragraphs and then relate them. At this level of writing, the conclusion flows logically from the developing paragraphs and is both appropriate and effective.

Stylistic choices used in Excellent (5) papers are usually both mature and polished. The students employ diction that effectively communicates their desired message; words and sentences are chosen specifically for their effect. These students are able to vary their syntax because they have control of effective constructions. Techniques such as parallel construction, varied length, balanced sentences, interrupted movement, and inverted order are used for effect.

Few mistakes in mechanics and grammar are present at this level; in effect, this writing is free from error. If students do make occasional errors, the effect of these errors is countered by the length and complexity of the response. Students writing at this level are willing to take risks by using complex wordings and structures that would normally perplex less skilled writers.

Section II: Functional Writing

Students earning Excellent (5) for Thought and Detail generally provide significant information that is enhanced by appropriate and precise details. The students use details from the assignment and add supporting information to emphasize and complete their responses. They cite qualifications that are appropriate in the context of the examination. They provide details about these qualifications and attempt to apply this information to the task at hand. These students use an appropriate businesslike and respectful tone.

Responses at this level are organized around a clearly focused topic statement. The students often state the purpose of their request, provide detailed information about themselves based upon actual and/or invented educational qualifications and past experience, and conclude with an appropriate statement of expectation. These students have little problem arranging the significant and often extensive information that they present. Their sentences and paragraphs flow smoothly.

Students whose writing skills are at the Excellent (5) level use words and sentence structures very effectively. They are able to select stylistic devices that enhance their responses. Few errors in mechanical or grammatical conventions are made in these compositions, and the mistakes that may be present do not impede meaning.

Section III: Response to Visual ccommunication

Students earning Excellent (5) for Thought and Detail are able to interpret the photograph insightfully. These individuals often go beyond deriving a moral or maxim from the visual and interpret the photograph by stating a generalized theme. This theme is usually extended and reinforced throughout the composition. Students at this level choose specific elements in the photograph to support the theme and relate these elements specifically to that theme. They also present either an explicit or an implicit explanation of the impact that the photographer's choices have on the viewer.

A controlling theme or idea is sustained throughout the response. Writers at this level often begin and end their compositions with variations of this controlling theme or idea. The ideas that are developed to support the theme are organized clearly and coherently. A sense of unity is established.

At the Excellent (5) level of writing, words and sentence structures are chosen carefully, to create an effective and polished response. Many sentences are purposefully structured to achieve the effects desired by the students, and few mechanical and grammatical errors are made. Students functioning at this level produce lengthy responses when fulfilling the requirements of the assignment.

STUDENT SAMPLE 5A (Personal Response)

General Comments

This essay outlines Jack Stettler's predicament following his accident and describes him as a "rational, level-headed individual." The student immediately comprehends Stettler's situation and states "I would have snapped" under the adverse conditions that Stettler encountered, nevertheless expressing the hope that he or she would react like Stettler if faced with "a situation like Mr. Stettler's." The composition moves back and forth from Stettler's cool and level-headed response to the student's perceived limited abilities. This switching back and forth effectively links the two reactions. This response was selected by standards confirmers and presented to group leaders and markers as an exemplar paper representative of Excellent (5) in all reporting categories.

Thought and Detail

In this paper, the student reveals an insightful understanding of the reading selection. Stettler's reaction to his situation is seen as showing "exceptional levelheadedness, and courage." The student's recognition of personal limitations when facing difficult situations is perceptive, and an effective comparison between Stettler's optimism and the student's own pessimism is made. Thoughtfully selected details from life are used to support the student's claims that everyone has the "survival instinct" but that "without the perseverance and drive to use this ability," most people simply give up. The student becomes somewhat contemplative when expressing the hope that "one day if I am in a situation like Mr. Stettler's I will remember him and find, within myself, the ability to save my own life."

Organization

The first paragraph combines the student's opinion of Stettler with a brief recounting of Stettler's situation. In paragraph two, the student discusses supposed personal shortcomings when faced with an unpleasant situation: "If I were placed in a similar situation, my reactions would deviate exceedingly to those of Mr. Stettler." The ideas the student develops contrast Jack Stettler's reactions with the student's conjectured responses to a similar situation. The conclusion is both appropriate and effective because the student hopes to "remember him and find, within myself, the ability to save my own life."

Jack Stettler is a rational level-headed individual. He took a nearly impossible situation and attempted to resolve his difficulties using logical thought. After his horse fell on him, he was injured with a broken shoulder as well as a sprained leg. It is unbelievable that a man in that much pain had the ability to try to map out a route to his neighbors farm.

If I were placed in a similar situation my reactions would deviate exceedingly to those of Mr. Stettler. My first order of business would definately be to panic. I would most likely think the worst. However, after the initial terror subsided it is possible that I too, would have attempted to find a way out. I believe that normal, human survival instincts would force me to take stock of the situation.

Mr. Stettlers reactions went beyond the use to survive. He kept his cool and did not panic while attempting to find help. He showed exceptional levelheadedness, and courage at the realization that his efforts had brought him in a complete circle back to his own campfire.

This set-back would have been it for me. I would have snapped. I am amazed that an individual could be faced with that kind of difficulty and not lose his/her mind. Minor set-backs in my life seem to cause myself a great deal of aggravation and frustration.

Matters of Choice

The words that the student chooses are both effective and polished. Jack Stettler is described as a "rational, level-headed individual" who has taken an "optomistic approach" to survival. The student uses effective diction in "normal, human survival instincts would force me to take stock of the situation" and "map out a route." A variety of short and long sentences are used for effect. For example, "I may like to think of myself as a realist but I think that that title belongs to Jack Stettler. He knew what his chances were." The student uses rather complex diction when referring to Jack Stettler's situation: "He took a nearly impossible situation and attempted to resolve his difficulties using logical thought." When discussing the personal situation, the student's "voice" is evident: "This set-back would have been it for me. I would have snapped." The student is in control of diction and syntax, and can juxtapose wordings to create humorous effects; for example, "My first order of business would definately be to panic."

Matters of Convention

The paper is essentially free from errors in both mechanics and grammar. The subjunctive form of the verb—"If I were placed in a similar situation"—and rather complex wording—"deviate exceedingly," "subsided," "levelheadedness," "frustration," "pessimistic"—are employed effectively. The errors present are common mistakes that do not reduce the clarity of the writing. They include apostrophe errors such as "neighbors farm" and "Mr. Stettlers reactions," and a few spelling mistakes such as "definately," "agrivation," "optomistic," and "alot." The student writes a complex and lengthy response, yet makes relatively few errors. Consistent control of conventions is demonstrated.

I definately have a pessimistic attitude. Jack Stettlers optomistic approach could be the only thing that gives him a chance at survival. I may like to think of myself as a realist but I think that that title belongs to Jack Stettler. He knew what his chances were. He calculated himself to have a one in four chance for survival. Knowing this he continued. He was optomistic that he could make it. If he hadn't at least made an effort to carry on his chances would have dropped to nil. Even after his major setback there is a slim chance that he could survive.

There is such a thing as survival instinct. We all have it. We all have the ability to fight for our lives. However, without the perseverance and drive to use this ability alot of us, myself included, would have probably thrown in the towel (so to speak)

Mr Stettlers experience has made me revaluate my own ability to rationalize. I have found myself to be lacking [redacted] in some areas of self preservation. Maybe one day if I am in a situation like Mr. Stettler's I will remember him and find, within myself, the ability to save my own life.

STUDENT SAMPLE 5B (Personal Response)

General Comments

In this paper, the theme of facing "life or death situations" is developed by using Jack Stettler's experience as a springboard in a well-written anecdote that demonstrates insightful understanding on the part of the student. The student describes Stettler's character as being "one of determination, optimisim, strength and faith" and then relates a personal anecdote about a situation that required the student to demonstrate those same courageous qualities. The student relates driving his or her mother to the doctor "one cold winter night" when the car hits "an icy spot" and slams "into the ditch." The student's solitary "journey down the icy road" to the nearest farm for help is described in considerable detail. The student is amazed by his or her own bravery but realizes that "my love for my mother brought out the courage." In the conclusion, the student relates this event to Jack Stettler's incident, saying "People are often unaware of just what they are capable of" when facing an apparently "unattainable goal." This clearly focused anecdote skilfully guides readers to a conclusion that associates the character traits of Jack Stettler to those of the student as narrator. The response is representative of Excellent (5) in most reporting categories.

Thought and Detail

The student links Jack Stettler's story to a personal experience in a perceptive and discerning way by comparing characteristics that Stettler possesses to personal traits that were unknown to the student until the winter incident. The student uses precise details about becoming stuck in a ditch, fearing for "my mother's health at the time," and being forced "to make a fast decision." The student compares this unforeseen personal courage to the bravery of Jack Stettler.

Organization

In the introduction, the student generalizes about facing "many obstacles" and overcoming "them successfuly" through "character traits sometimes unknown" to us. This idea is sustained through references to Jack Stettler's situation and through the lengthy and highly appropriate personal anecdote. The student's own story is told in chronological sequence. The student then shifts from the past into the present, reflecting upon the self-understanding gained through the winter experience. The conclusion is appropriate because the student relates the general theme stated in the introduction to the "life or death" personal experience.

Throughout the course of life we face many obstacles that must be overcome. Whether or not we overcome them successfully or not depends a great deal on the nature of our personalities. No obstacle however, is as difficult as one which requires decisions involving life or death situations such was the case in "Day Storm" and in my own personal experience. Character traits sometimes unknown to us can sometimes be revealed during the most trying times.

In the story "Day Storm," Whitter was a man of great courage. He is suffering not only physically but mentally as well. Because of his accident he has a sprained leg and also a broken shoulder. The lack of food brings on the pain of hunger to him as well. Whitter is alone and must rely on his own ingenuity to save his own life. Although he faces all the antagonizing and painful things, he refuses to give up hope. His character is one of determination, optimism, strength and faith within himself.

There was a time in my life when I thought of myself as a person with very little valor or self reliance. This attitude changed one cold and winter night three years ago. I was traveling with my mother into town late at night in her old and somewhat unpredictable car. She had awakened me from my sleep earlier that evening to tell me she was in pain and needed to get to the doctor in town who lived fourty-five miles from us. We were on our way when I hit an icy spot on the road and lost control of the vechicle, as a result the car slammed into the ditch and we were stuck. It was then that I realized we did not have much fuel to keep us warm through the night if no help were to come along. My fears for my mother's health at the time then forced me to make a fast decision.

Matters of Choice

This composition contains many examples of efficient diction. The student refers to "the course of life," to "the nature of our personalities," and to "character traits" that "can sometimes be revealed during the most trying times." Sentences are purposefully structured for effect. The student creates sentences laden with information, yet keeps these sentences under control; for example, "I was traveling with my mother into town late at night in her old and somewhat unpredictable car"; "It was then that I realized we did not have much fuel to keep us warm through the night if no help were to come along"; "So began my journey down the icy road in an effort to reach the nearest farm." This student occasionally lapses into redundancy, however—for example, "Whether or not we overcome them successfuly or not" and "Character traits sometimes unknown to us can sometimes be revealed"—but this is likely a function of the "first-draft" nature of writing in an examination situation.

Matters of Convention

Errors that are present in this composition seldom reduce the clarity of communication. There is a comma splice in "We were on our way when I hit an icy spot on the road and lost control of the vehicle, as a result the car slammed into the ditch . . . ." Spelling errors such as "mentaly," "fourty-five," "vechicle," "alot," "suprised," and "personaly" are countered effectively by the correct spelling and usage of difficult words such as "obstacles," "physically," "ingenuity," "valor," "unpredictable," "defiance," and "unattainable." The student has written a lengthy account of a personal experience and has taken a number of risks by using complex structures such as "I did eventually reach help and it was only later that I realized what I had done."

I began my journey down the icy road in an effort to reach the nearest farm. The cold wind burned at my face, my fingers and toes began to be feeling and my head ached from the cold. However the thought of my mother caused me to keep going and not give up.

I did eventually reach help and it was only later that I realized what I had done. People said I showed alot of bravery for doing what I did. When I think about it now I am still somewhat suprised at myself for succeeding. But my love for my mother brought out the courage, strength and defiance of danger that I never knew I had.

People are often unaware of just what they are capable of. They may see themselves in a certain way and suddenly realize that they can do more. Such was the case of the character Slattler and also myself personaly. In conclusion I must say that one ~~must~~ should never underestimate the ~~power of~~ possibilities of reaching a once thought ~~or~~ unattainable goal.

STUDENT SAMPLE 5C (Personal Response)

General Comments

This composition opens with an account of a personal experience about "a 255 kilometer bike trip from Jasper to Banff." The student provides much detail about the hardships and gruelling conditions and about the personality changes that occurred when the situation became difficult. The student then compares the bike trip with Stettler's situation and subsequently cites the novels *Ordinary People* and *King Rat* as other stories in which characters have faced difficult situations. The connection of these novels to the theme is expanded. Even though a number of ideas are presented, the composition is developed logically and consistently. The writing is both stylistically mature and mechanically correct. This response is representative of Excellent (5) in most reporting categories.

Thought and Detail

The student compares the difficult personal situation that develops during the bicycling trip with Jack Stettler's threatening experience. Many details are presented from the spring trip; the student's comments reveal a perceptive understanding of how personalities can become "so different when faced with pressure." The student discusses two novels that further support the theme that "Different people have different ways of dealing with difficult situations." Characters from the two novels are discussed in terms of the various trials they faced. This precise use of support expands and enlivens the student's response.

Organization

The phrase in the introduction "can be applied to many situations" is used to capture the reader's interest, and it serves to encourage the reader to continue reading. In the introduction, the student presents the idea that people react differently to difficult situations and that "The decision to give up or to continue is a never ending question" that "can be applied to many situations." The student elaborates logically and coherently about the difficult situations the bicyclists faced during the bicycle trip, about Stettler's predicament, and about the two novels. The conclusion is somewhat general; however, it does relate to the theme presented in the introduction and to the events discussed in the examples.

Different people have different ways of dealing with difficult situations. The decision to give up or to continue is a never ending question and can be applied to many situations.

It was May long weekend of 1991 when my friends Tony, Martin, Becky, and I decided to go on a 255 kilometer bike trip from Jasper to Banff. In order to be able to apply for our gold Duke of Edinburgh award this September, we needed to complete this trip. The road seemed continuously uphill, and within the first two hours we had an accident. My front tire got caught on Martin's back tire and I went tumbling down. I had my pack on my back so I couldn't stop myself from falling and Becky was going too fast to stop, so she rode right over top of me. The next thing I knew we were in Jasper, again, getting stiches in my knee. We had decided to continue our trip, regardless. On the second day we made ~~eeer~~ the 150 kilometer mark and we were sunburnt,

Matters of Choice

The student makes effective stylistic choices and sustains this mature approach throughout the lengthy and detailed composition. Diction is impressive as the bicycle trip is outlined: "The road seemed continuously uphill"; one bicyclist "went tumbling down" and required stitches; another bicyclist eventually "reached his physical limits." The student carefully structures many sentences; for example, effective parallelism is achieved in "As for Martin he clammed right up, didn't say a word, gritted his teeth, and kept on biking." Although the student has not consistently polished the composition, he or she has written a great deal of effectively worded prose.

Matters of Convention

This student has written a lengthy composition that contains few errors and that incorporates relatively complex mechanical and grammatical constructions. A few slangy or informal (but appropriate in context) constructions such as "our bums hurt" are used, none of which impedes meaning or clarity. On the whole, the minor errors that are present do not reduce the effectiveness of the composition. There are very few spelling mistakes considering the length and complexity of the response.

tired, hungry, and our bums hurts so much we couldn't sit properly. This trip wasn't as easy as we had expected. Becky quit because she thought she couldn't go any farther, so we loaded her bike in the van. Tony and I began to argue, something we have never done before the trip. I had thoughts of quitting but I was determined to finish, and couldn't face going home without completing the trip. As for Martin, he clammed right up, didn't say a word, gritted his teeth, and kept on biking.

Throughout this difficult situation, I learned how four people, who I thought I knew inside out, could be so different when faced with pressure. Becky, normally is an out going, not a quitter type of person, yet when in a difficult situation quits. Martin, normally, is the weakest of the group physically and mentally turned out to be the strongest. Tony is a great biker, but when he reached his physical limits, began to argue and fight with everyone around him.

I got crabby and tired, yet determination set in and I continued the trip.

Similarly to the situation we were faced with, the short story "Dry Storm" by Paul St Pierre, the character Settler, was also faced with a difficult situation. Instead of sitting around waiting for someone to rescue him, he was very determined and decided to get up and get help for himself. During our bike trip, instead of loading our bikes in the van, we decided to continue the trip.

The novel Ordinary People, by Judith Guest, describes how people dealt with difficult situations also. Conrad, the son of Calvin and Beth dealt with pressure by trying to escape it and committ suicide. He is not successful at his attempt and in the end resorts to determination and willpower to survive the situation. Karen, however, attempts to commit suicide, fails, and attempts again and succeeds. Beth, the mother, dealt with ~~the~~ a difficult

situation by ignoring it. She got involved with community events instead of facing her problems at home. In the novel King Rat, the characters are also faced with a difficult situation. The King resorts to greed, power and money to survive. Sean resorts to homosexuality in order to survive the difficult situation. Hatred for King and Peter is ~~not~~ what Grey survived on. These are all examples of how ~~people~~ different characteristics of people show through when faced with a difficult situation.

To give up, or to continue fighting is a question that is never ending in today's society. How to deal with difficult situations may bring out unknown characteristics or traits in a person.

STUDENT SAMPLE 5A (Functional Writing)

General Comments

This letter of application is clearly written and well-organized. The student effectively uses the information in the assignment to apply for the position of "full-time counter worker" and cites the newspaper in which the advertisement appeared. Appropriate information is provided to support the application, including details of experience the student gained from telemarketing, computing, and shift work. The student judiciously offers an explanation as to why her former job was terminated, and concludes by thanking the personnel manager for reviewing the application. The tone in the concluding sentence—"I would like to thank-you for reviewing my application, and guarantee that I would satisfy your expectations as an employee"—is positive and manages to be forceful while remaining polite. This response was selected by standards confirmers and presented to group leaders and markers as an exemplar paper representative of Excellent (5) in most reporting categories.

Thought and Detail

The student's precise awareness of audience is demonstrated through the appropriate and polite tone—"I believe I may be a suitable candidate as a full-time counter worker"—and through the information provided. The student gives appropriate details regarding her "telephone skills" as a "top" telemarketing saleswoman and also mentions some experience interacting "successfully with the public" at a surfboard rental shop. The student explains why the previous job was terminated. In the conclusion, the student refers to her "eager personality" and guarantees to "satisfy your expectations as an employee." As an apparent afterthought, the student appends a home telephone number and reference information, which provide the prospective employer with important additional information.

Organization

The student focuses the letter clearly; the reader immediately knows that the writer is seeking the position of "full-time counter worker." The student begins with the statement "I believe I may be a suitable candidate as a full-time counter worker" and then provides job qualifications. These details are coherently related and presented in a logical order. In the conclusion, the student expresses thanks for "reviewing" the application and makes assurances about her qualifications.

609 Nalcreek Drive
Nalwen, Alberta
T9R 3P3

June 7, 1991

Ms. Cynthia Melnyk
Personnel Manager, U-Save Rent-a-Car
P.O. Box 1172
Nalwen, Alberta
T5J 4T3

Dear Ms. Melnyk:

I am writing in response to your classified ad in the June 6 issue of the Nalwen News. I believe I may be a suitable candidate as a full-time counter worker under your employ.

My experience in telemarketing will prove my telephone skills. As a worker for Contel Industries (August '88 - Oct '89) I became one of the top saleswomen in distribution of magazine subscriptions. The work involved proper phone usage as well as intense computer work.

I have also experienced shift work at Sam's Surfboard Rental (Summers of '88 to present (previously located on the North Shore) for 4 consecutive summers. At this position I had worked many days alone and interacted successfully with the public.

Writing Skills

The student uses effective words such as "interacted successfully with the public." The polite and formal stylistic choices contribute effectively to the letter: "I believe my hardworking, eager personality will be of benefit to both my employer and myself in an establishment such as U-Save Rent-a-Car." Although the letter is relatively lengthy, it is essentially free from error.

With the relocation of my previous place of employment I am interested ~~in~~ becoming part of a company with a good location and opportunity for advancement. I believe my hardworking, eager personality ~~[redacted]~~ will be of benefit to both my employer and myself in an establishment such as ~~[redacted]~~ U-Save Rent-a-Car.

In closing, I would like to thank you for reviewing my application, and guarantee that I would satisfy your expectations as an employee.

Sincerely,

Pat Jones.

Home #: 924-6397.
References available on request.

STUDENT SAMPLE 5B (Functional Writing)

General Comments

This letter contains specific and precise details. The student notes "I am an honour roll graduate with many abilities to contribute" to the prospective job. Although no details are provided about the "many part-time jobs" the student has held, significant information is given about the three courses that the student completed. Personality traits are then matched with characteristics the student perceives are needed for the job. The writing is clear, focused, and provides relevant details for the reader. Mature diction and sentence structure are used, and there are few errors. This response is representative of Excellent (5) in most reporting categories.

Thought and Detail

The student achieves effectiveness and fulfils the task by the use of precise detail. The student lists the specific skills that he or she believes are assets for the desired job. The student is "an honour roll graduate" and provides additional information about the "two computer courses" and "'Professional People Course'" he or she has taken. The student refers to an attitude of "intelligence, integrity and honesty" and feels able to supply customers "with ease and appreciation." The tone is assertive and polite.

Organization

The details the student presents are developed effectively. The student begins with a clearly focused topic statement about the job application and adds, "I feel I would benifit your company greatly and hope you consider my skills as appropiate for the job." Specific skills and qualifications are presented through coherently developed sentences. Although the response does not conclude with information about how the prospective employer can contact the job applicant, the conclusion does contain an appropriate statement of expectation: "I hope you will consider my application for the position of Counter Person and hope to hear from you as soon as possible."

609 Nalcreek Drive
Nalwen, Alberta
T9R 3P3

June 7, 1991

Ms. Cynthia Melnyk
Personnel Manager, U-Save Rent-a-Car
P.O. Box 1172
Nalwen, Alberta
T5J 4T3

Dear Ms. Melnyk:

I'm writing un reference to your ad un the Nalwen News on June 6 1991 for the full-time position of Counter Person. I feel I would benifit your company greatly and hope you consider my skills as appropiate for the job.

I am an honour roll graduate with many abilities to contribute. Through high school I had many part-time jobs dealing with the public, and enjoying each one. After high school I was enrolled at college where I took two computer courses; one was called "Word Perfect" and the other "Word Processing." I can type 65-75 words per minute and can deal with the utmost confidentiality towards customers.

Writing Skills

Words and sentence structures are frequently effective. The vocabulary creates an overall effect of a well-written response: "and can deal with the utmost confidentiallity towards customers," and "I am a very warm, caring and cheerful person to work with and I believe my qualifications could help supply your customers with ease and appreciation." Sentence variety is limited; many sentences begin with the word "I." Few spelling errors—"benifit," "appropiate," "miniute," and "confidentiallity"—appear in this relatively complex letter.

In addition I have also taken a "Professional People Course" and have attained a high level of professional attitudes towards the public. My attitude is one of intelligence, integrity and honesty. I am a very warm, caring and cheerful person to work with and I believe my qualifications could help supply your customers with ease and appreciation.

I hope you will ~~cond~~ consider my application for the position of Counter Person and hope to hear from you as soon as possible.

yours truly,
Pat Jones.

STUDENT SAMPLE 5C (Functional Writing)

General Comments

In this letter, the student successfully addresses the assignment by providing specific and appropriate details about education and experience. The writing demonstrates a control of complex sentence structures and mechanical conventions. This response is representative of Excellent (5) in most reporting categories.

Thought and Detail

The response is developed by providing specific details about the applicant. These details include the applicant's grades ("Throughout my grade twelve year I have maintained a B+ average"), relevant courses ("I have taken and completed three levels of computing, learning many word processors, spread sheets, invoices, sorting, and charting"), work experience ("During my schooling I have held a part-time job at a gas station as a cashier"), and attitude to team work ("I enjoy being part of a team effort, and working with others to succeed"). These abilities highlight attitudes and personal qualities that are logically related to the job of "counter personnel." The student uses a suitably respectful and businesslike tone, indicating an awareness of audience.

Organization

The response is organized logically and effectively. The opening paragraph states the student's purpose: to apply for an advertised job. The following paragraphs list in considerable detail the student's qualifications. For each qualification cited, the student identifies the specific skills acquired. Paragraphs move sequentially to a polite conclusion that contains an appropriate request: "I hope to hear from you in the near future to set up an interview time. Again I say thank you."

609 Nalcreek Drive
Nalwen, Alberta
T9R 3P3

June 7, 1991

Ms. Cynthia Melnyk
Personnel Manager, U-Save Rent-a-Car
P.O. Box 1172
Nalwen, Alberta
T5J 4T3

Dear Ms. Melnyk:

I am writing to you to apply for the position of counter personnel at your U-SAVE RENT A-CAR ~~boss~~ business as advertised in the Nalwen News on Thursday, June 6.

I will be graduating from Collins High School at the end of June of this year. Throughout my grade twelve year I have maintained a B+ average. I have also taken many courses that I find would only increase my chances of working for your business as an employee. I have taken and completed three levels of computing, learning many word processors, spread sheets, invoices, sorting, and charting. I have also taken and completed three levels of typing for which I have learned typing skills, proper letter format skills, and obtained a speed of sixty words per minute. During my schooling I have held a part-time job at a gas station as a cashier. I have learned to use a cash register and to deal with the public.

Writing Skills

The student reveals an ability to handle complex structures by using impressive sentences such as "I enjoy very much being involved with the public, to take time out and lend a helping hand" and "Thank you for reading my letter, taking the time out for me." The repetition of the idea of "taking the time out" is an effective stylistic choice. Parallel structure—"I enjoy being part of a team effort, and working with others to succeed"—is used effectively. Interesting wordings—"I hope that you find my qualifications meet your qualifications"—are used. Few errors are made; this student has a very good understanding of how to control mechanical conventions.

I have been involved with many team sports at school since I started high school. I enjoy being part of a team effort, and working with others to succeed. I have been part of many fund raiser groups to raise money for various charities such as Uncles at Large. I enjoy very much being involved with the public, to take time out and lend a helping hand.

Thank you for reading my letter, taking the time out for me. I hope that you find my qualifications meet your qualifications. I hope to hear from you in the near future to ~~sep~~ set up an interview time. Again I say thank you.

Sincerely,

Pat Jones

Pat Jones

(enclosure)

STUDENT SAMPLE 5A (Visual Response)

General Comments

In this response, the student gives an insightful interpretation of the photograph. The student formulates the theme that impoverished people have "dreams and hope" and for this reason the mother "has introduced music to her children" so that "they can make something of themselves." Details from the photograph are chosen to develop the contrast between the harshness of the family's present situation and their hope for a brighter future, with the violin music acting as intermediary. The student cites the element in the photograph of the mother "cradling her child" as evidence that the mother is a caring individual who "wishes the best for her sons." In the conclusion, the student goes beyond the analysis of the photograph to express a personal reaction. "Initially when I looked at this photograph I felt cold, but as I looked deeper into it I got a feeling of hope and dreams, the hopes and dreams of the under priveliged." The writing style is coherent. The theme is stated, developed, and consistently maintained. Few errors are present. This response was selected by standards confirmers and presented to group leaders and markers as an exemplar paper representative of Excellent (5) in all reporting categories.

Thought and Detail

In the introduction, the student states the theme that "Poverty is common in many countries" and poor people "spend their whole lives dreaming for something" better. The discussion about "dreams and hope" moves from a global perspective to a close look at the situation of the family in the photograph. Details enhance the composition and contribute to the theme. The mother is portrayed as "gazing out of the window towards the future" and the student proposes that music may provide an opportunity for her children to "lead a better life than she had." The "cold, drab, bareness" of this family's life is "juxtaposed" with the "tranquility of violin music." The student recognizes that the photographer has highlighted one of the boys in the composition, interpreting the emphasis to mean "that he will go on to be famous and lead a better life." The conclusion is both positive and insightful.

Organization

The idea of impoverished people having hopes and dreams is sustained throughout the composition. This theme is developed through well-written and thoughtful sentences that flow smoothly to an effective conclusion. Paragraphs move from details about elements of the photograph to speculations about those details: "The photographer juxtaposed the cold, drab, bareness of this families life with the beauty and tranquility of violin music. This leads me to believe that the boys are dreaming also for something better."

Writing Skills

Diction is carefully chosen to create images. The student sees the family as having "poor gray lives" and describes the mother as "gazing out of the window towards the future." The clarity of the composition is not appreciably reduced by errors such as comma splices: "The main focus is in the center at the older boy, this could mean that he will go on to be famous and lead a better life, he seems determined." The student misspells "family's" and omits an apostrophe in the phrase "this families life" and misspells "underprivileged" as "under priveliged." However, other difficult words such as "juxtaposed," "tranquility," and "initially" are correctly spelled. The student takes risks by using complex sentence structures and imaginative diction, yet makes few grammatical or mechanical errors and none that detract from the effectiveness of the composition.

Poverty is common in many countries in the world. And the people who live in poverty have dreams and hope. Sometimes they spend their whole lives dreaming for something that would lift them out of their poor gray lives. In this picture I feel that the boys are dreaming that someday they will be famous.

The lady in this picture is their mother and she is gazing out of the window towards the future. The lady has introduced music to her children with the hope that maybe they can make something of themselves, and lead a better life than she had.

The photographer juxtaposed ~~[illegible]~~ the cold, drab, bareness of this families life with the beauty and tranquility of violin music. This leads me to believe that the boys are dreamy also for something better.

The mother in the foreground cradling her child means that she is a caring mother and wishes the best for her sons. The main focus is in the center at the older boy, This could mean that he will go on to be famous and lead a better life, he seems determined.

Initially when I looked at this photograph I felt cold, but as I looked deeper into it I got a feeling of hope and dreams, the hopes and dreams of the under privelged.

STUDENT SAMPLE 5B (Visual Communication)

General Comments

The student's interpretation of the photograph is sensitive, although somewhat sentimental. The theme proposed by the student is that the mother and son have responded to their poverty with determination. This determination will create a better life, both in the present and in the future, because of the gift of music. The student discusses the idea of hope that he or she sees arising from the fact that the boy is playing music: "someday the practising will give him a better life" than the mother had. The student uses complex sentence structures and makes few errors. The response is representative of Excellent (5) in most reporting categories.

Thought and Detail

The photograph is interpreted through a mature and insightful theme. The student focuses the theme on determination, recognizing that there is hope for the children in the photograph because of their music and because the mother "gives her children all that she can provide." The details about the mother's role add to the clarity of the response. Throughout the composition, the student sustains the interpretation that the photographer has created a particular message—that of a mother giving her children all she can provide.

Organization

The introduction provides a slightly different twist to the topic by establishing determination, fueled by poverty, as the focus of the response: "Poverty created the small room, the empty walls and the determination of the boy and his mother to provide for each other." The mother is portrayed as a parent who "gives her children all that she can provide" and provides the boy with the means to "a better life than she had, a job and a home full of objects." The paragraphs flow smoothly and coherently to the conclusion, which repeats the ideas of hope, music, and family love.

Writing Skills

The student uses complex word choices and sentence structures such as "The mother looks uncertain and frightened as she stares out into the sunshine, from her dimly lit room" and "The mother provides life for her son, not by colors and pictures and wealth, but by giving him music & instruments to color her home." Few errors in either mechanics or grammar are made in this lengthy composition. This response contains effective and polished writing.

Poverty created the small room, the empty walls and the determination of the boy and his mother to provide for each other. The mother looks uncertain and frightened as she stares out into the sunshine, from her dimly lit room. The photographer shows that she gives her children all that she can provide. She provides from in her heart a compassion and a gift of allowing her son to be more than she was ever allowed to be. ~~and~~ The mother provides life for her son, not by colors and pictures and wealth, but by giving him music + instruments to color her home. She provides for her baby much the same way, only giving him a gift that will sustain his life... milk from her breast. Her children mean more to her than objects that her scrimping of money could buy.

The mother wants her boy to experience different kinds of life, so she buys him a few different instruments to practice on. She may even hope that someday the practising will give him a better life than she had, a job and a home full of objects.

She hopes that he'll never be alone, like she feels sometimes, because he'll have the music and her love wrapped inside it.

STUDENT SAMPLE 5C (Visual Communication)

General Comments

The student begins with descriptive one-word sentence fragments: "Black. Depression. Despair." The generalized idea that is then developed refers to "the hunger in the mother's eyes for a better way of life." A mature interpretation of the photograph, including the analysis of symbols, is given: the woman's dress and apron "demonstrate the desoluteness of their situation," the softly focused picture represents "a confusion and sense of loss," the boy surrounded by light "symbolizes the only hope in the situation." The controlling idea of the boy bringing hope to the family is clearly sustained and is supported through the effectively chosen sentence structures. This response is representative of Excellent (5) in most reporting categories.

Thought and Detail

The interpretation of the photograph is mature and sensitive, and the elements selected, including the title "A Sliver of Light in the Darkness," are both precise and purposefully chosen. The theme that "The photographer has captured the hunger in the mother's eyes for a better way of life" is both clear and relevant. To the student, the dark lighting that "reinforces the despair of the situation" is contrasted with the light surrounding the boy. The details are thoughtfully selected to support the student's interpretation of the photograph and of the choices the photographer has made.

Organization

The controlling idea of the mother hungering "for a better way of life" is developed effectively. The introduction and conclusion, although brief, support this idea of desiring more in life. There is a coherent flow of ideas that is based upon the photographer's use of light and dark, symbolism, focus, and contrast. The conclusion is forceful: the student imagines that the boy wishes "to bring the light back into his mother's eyes and see her smile again like the sun."

A Sliver of Light in the Darkness

REVISED WORK

Black. Depression. Despair. All of these emotions are clearly expressed in the portrait. The photographer has captured the hunger in the mother's eyes for a better way of life.

That hunger ~~[illegible]~~ grows At you, because the desire for something better is so strong, yet seems impossible. The young boy, with his many instruments, probably does not comprehend the fullness of her sacrifice. The lighting is very dark ~~[illegible]~~ which illustrates and reinforces the despair of the situation. The dingy room with only the necessities tells a tale of the poverty stricken family. The mother looks out of the window as if waiting for someone to tell her the nightmare is over. The boy is surrounded by light which symbolizes the only hope in the situation. The hope that he will do all he

Writing Skills

For the most part, the selection and use of words and sentence structures are effective. The student takes some chances with wordings such as "hunger gnaws at you," "the desoluteness of their situation," and "comparable to the mother forlorness." Complex sentence structures are used: "The young boy, with his many instruments, probably does not comprehend the fullness of her sacrifice." The few errors that are made in this lengthy response do not reduce its clarity.

can to make a living and be happy. The photographer just passed the dirty, dark room and the shiny brass instruments. The head dress and apron are the very basic of attire and demonstrate the deadliness of their situation. The picture is blurry which indicates a confusion and sense of loss. The room itself is very bare and empty which is comparable to the mother's loneliness. The boy learns another new instrument. Not by desire or entertainment but for his mother.

His hope is to play and earn a living. If only to bring the light back into his mothers eyes and see her smile again like the sun.

SUMMARY OF ELEMENTS FOUND IN EXCELLENT (5) PAPERS

The English 33 Diploma Examination *Part A: Written Response* papers that are representative of the Excellent (5) level contain writing produced in a time-specific examination context by general diploma students that is exceptional for students completing English 33. These papers exhibit a number of characteristics that distinguish them as Excellent (5) responses.

Students demonstrate a perceptive understanding of what the assignment requires. They are able to use an appropriate tone and are well aware of their audience. These papers have voice or "flavor"; the voice of the student shines through and engages the reader. These students may quote selectively from the wording in the assignments to fulfill a specific purpose in their responses. Precise, well-chosen details, which may be factual or imaginary, provide insightful support for their themes. Students at this level are willing to delve into their topics, bringing their subjects to life through carefully selected details.

Students at the Excellent (5) level are able to organize their work logically and clearly. The compositions typically open in a way that piques the reader's interest. These students achieve unity through well-developed, coherently related paragraphs that flow smoothly throughout the composition. Typically, an effective and appropriate conclusion follows naturally from the information presented.

Writing skills demonstrated by students at the Excellent (5) level show exceptional qualities. The students appear to have extensive vocabularies and display an awareness of and appreciation for the connotative value of words. They do not use words unnaturally or in an artificial way. The diction is precise and belongs to the student. The students employ a variety of sentence structures such as emphatic short sentences, parallel structures, and natural and inverted order. They are able to use sentence fragments for effect. They write extensive responses in which they are willing to take risks with lively word choice and complex sentence structures. Errors in mechanics and grammar are rare; errors that are present do not detract from the effectiveness of the composition. These students project confidence in their abilities as writers.

In summary, writing representative of the Excellent (5) level is composed of precise and thoughtful details and presents a focused, coherent, and smoothly developed topic. The words and structures used are effective and and are basically free from error. Responses at this level depict a superior standard of writing for students completing English 33.

SECTION FOUR
CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR INSTRUCTION

CONCLUSIONS

An analysis of student responses at the Satisfactory (3) level and the Excellent (5) level for *Part A: Written Response* of the June 1991 English 33 Diploma Examination provides a basis for comparing and contrasting writing skills at the two levels. This analysis leads to a number of instructional suggestions that should be helpful in preparing students to approach the sections of the examination successfully and to move beyond the satisfactory level.

Students performing at the Satisfactory (3) level tended to interpret the assignments in a very general way. When dealing with the Personal Response to Literature assignment, they focused upon a conventional theme or idea and expressed their thoughts quite clearly. They used general examples from life and literature without providing specific or elaborating details that would have enlivened their compositions. There were glimpses of effective writing and correct usage. When responding to the Functional Writing assignment, their tone was polite, personal, and colloquial; these students were generally aware of the audience for whom they were writing.

Students at this level organized their compositions in a straightforward way by employing an introduction, developing paragraphs, and a conclusion that related to the topic. The writing was, in general, coherent; however, coherence faltered on occasion as the students struggled to link sentences and ideas. These students relied upon simple words and sentence structures, perhaps to avoid making errors. Typically, when they attempted to use more complex structures, problems arose. The greatest problem with writing skills at this level was the unevenness of control. Students made good choices on some occasions and then lost control of syntax when employing other structures. They had problems deciding when to terminate their sentences; they tended to include too much when trying to make their writing more complex. It is, however, important to emphasize that writing at this level does demonstrate some strengths. Occasionally, for example, an Excellent (5) level sentence or phrase is exhibited in a Satisfactory (3) level composition. Students at this level may realize that good writing requires craft but can only occasionally demonstrate this craftsmanship. This may indicate that, at this particular stage, further instruction and guidance would enhance the students' writing skills.

Students at this level made errors in mechanics and grammar typical of first-draft writing; however, these mistakes did not significantly reduce the communication of the response. In general, writing at the Satisfactory (3) level was relatively brief.

Students performing at the Excellent (5) level usually interpreted the assignments in an insightful way. When responding to the Personal Response to Literature assignment, they presented clear themes or ideas and used precise and significant examples from life and literature to support their themes. Some students moved from the personal aspects of their response to more universal aspects. When responding to the Functional Writing assignment, these students used an appropriate tone and were especially aware of the audience for whom they were writing. At this level, the compelling voice of the student engaged the reader. Papers at the Excellent (5) level were organized logically and purposefully. The introduction, developing paragraphs, and conclusion sustained the theme of the composition. The word choices, sentence structures, and ideas flowed effectively, thus enhancing coherence. Writing skills demonstrated at this level were relatively even; word choices and sentence structures were consistently effective. These students used complex wordings and syntax, yet they made few errors. In general, writing at the Excellent (5) level was relatively lengthy and demonstrated fluency on the part of the students.

The following chart summarizes the key features of Satisfactory (3) papers and Excellent (5) papers.

FEATURES OF
SATISFACTORY (3) AND EXCELLENT (5) PAPERS
IN ENGLISH 33

SATISFACTORY (3) FEATURES	EXCELLENT (5) FEATURES
Thought and Detail	**Thought and Detail**
• ordinary and credible interpretation of literary selection	• thoughtful and often original understanding of literary selection
• student's conventional opinion is supported by generalizations; the opinion is plausible and predictable	• student's perceptive opinion is supported by specific and precise detail
• support is functional and straightforward; there is a lack of developed support	• support is precise and thoughtfully selected; support demonstrates depth of thought
• student has a general awareness of audience but assumes that the reader has knowledge about the subject. The student thinks the reader is inside his/her mind and fails to provide important information necessary for understanding	• student has a precise awareness of audience and provides the reader with details about the subject. There is concern for the audience: the student provides important and essential information necessary for understanding
• generalized interpretation of visual communication that takes the form of a maxim or moral	• insightful interpretation of visual communication that takes the form of a theme or generalized idea
• personal ideas expressed	• personal and universal ideas expressed
• gaps in information given	• complete information given
Organization	**Organization**
• general topic statement	• clearly focused topic statement
• general controlling idea mechanically maintained. Coherence may falter; for example, the switch from literature to personal experience is often abrupt	• clear controlling idea sustained successfully. Coherent ideas; for example, smooth and logical switch from literature to personal experience
• functional beginning, development, and conclusion. The framework is obtrusive	• beginning provides direction and encourages further reading; smooth flow from development to conclusion
• sentences and paragraphs generally related	• sentences and paragraphs flow to appropriate conclusion
• mechanical transitions	• carefully chosen transitions between ideas

FEATURES OF
SATISFACTORY (3) AND EXCELLENT (5) PAPERS
IN ENGLISH 33 (Continued)

SATISFACTORY (3) FEATURES	EXCELLENT (5) FEATURES
Matters of Choice	**Matters of Choice**
•choices occasionally effective; some words and structures chosen for effect; diction and syntax are uneven	•choices usually effective and polished; many words and structures chosen for effect; control is evident
•appropriate but generalized diction; sometimes imprecise	•appropriate and specific diction; mature and precise
•little figurative language	•imagery and figures of speech used for effect
•personal, colloquial, and conversational choices; speech patterns reflected in writing	•personal but sophisticated choices; recognition of distinction between written and spoken styles
•some sentences structured for effect; for example, short emphatic sentences, parallel structure	•many sentences structured for effect; for example, balance, inversion, rhetorical questions
•most sentences follow the natural order (subject-verb-object)	•a variety of sentence order prevails
•uncertainty about when to end a sentence; too much is included	•controlled sentences including effectively used clauses and phrases
Matters of Convention	**Matters of Convention**
•occasional errors in mechanics and grammar	•essentially free from errors in mechanics and grammar
•fewer errors when simplistic wordings used. More errors when complex wordings attempted	•errors do not increase noticeably when complex wordings are used
•common errors: incorrect use of possessive, sentence fragments, comma splices, run-on sentences, lack of subject-verb agreement, misuse of homonyms, sounding errors ("might of" for "might have"), adverb/adjective usage ("never had a really choice to make"), problem using "in which" structures, errors in tense, misuse of second-person pronoun "you," and spelling ("alot")	•common errors may be made; however, they are few in number even though complex structures are used
•errors may reduce the clarity of communication.	•errors do not reduce the clarity of communication

SUGGESTIONS FOR INSTRUCTION

A comparison of the characteristics of the Satisfactory (3) and the Excellent (5) responses provides useful information for teachers of English 33. To help students who normally achieve a Satisfactory (3) move beyond satisfactory writing to a higher level of performance, English 33 teachers may wish to consider those traits that are common to each level. They will then need to draw upon their own creativity in providing writing experiences for English 33 students so that those at the Satisfactory (3) level can begin to apply consistently the skills they occasionally demonstrate—skills that English 33 students who achieve higher marks are able to apply at will.

Although English 33 teachers will be familiar with the following suggestions for instruction, these comments should assist English 33 students attempting to improve their performance on *Part A: Written Response*.

Pre-writing, Outlining, and Drafting

Students who earn high marks demonstrate through their writing that they are able to establish a "mind set" in order to complete the assignment in a creative or personalized way. These students convey an understanding of the topic and are comfortable with it. They may think about the assignment and organize details in their minds before they begin to write, or they may jot down rough ideas that they then sort into an outline or rough draft. Whichever way they plan their compositions, the better writers are aware of the readers' needs and plan to meet those needs.

Students should be encouraged to reflect upon the topic before they begin to write, to consider all its aspects, and to formulate a plan that includes the specific details that they want to use. Some students prefer to write out the entire composition in rough form; others complete rough drafts of their introduction and conclusion. Some students make an outline of their composition and write their final copy from it; others write with little or no outline but with a singleness of purpose produced by a controlling idea. Students should be given the opportunity to write using all these approaches. In this way, they can determine what works best for them under examination conditions and in other opportunities for writing.

Providing Details for the Reader

The difference between Satisfactory (3) and Excellent (5) responses in the area of Thought and Detail is most evident in the appropriateness of supporting details. Students should be urged to provide purposeful and precise support from personal experiences and from literature they have read. If they recount a personal experience, they should provide specific details that are relevant to the topic, enlivening their personal account in such a way that the reader can share the experience. When literature is used, students should choose details from the selection that support their theme or thesis. These precise, thoughtfully chosen, and relevant details are provided as a service to the reader. They enable the reader to follow the development of ideas. Successful writers do not presume that the reader can enter their minds and know their intentions.

Organizing Information

Although students at both the Satisfactory (3) level and the Excellent (5) level produce beginnings, developing paragraphs, and conclusions, the strength of superior organization lies in its unobtrusiveness and smoothness. Students should be made aware that the Excellent (5) papers are unified with transitional devices, which facilitate writing that flows smoothly from the introduction to the conclusion.

Making Effective Choices

One of the major differences between Satisfactory (3) and Excellent (5) writing is in the consistency of effective choices. Students producing satisfactory writing attempt to choose appropriate words and use varied sentence structures; however, their choices are uneven—some are effective, others are ineffective. Teachers can help these students progress by encouraging their strengths, by pointing out what they have done well, and by telling them *why* what they have done is effective. By following this procedure, teachers can raise their students' consciousness about what constitutes effective writing. Additional assistance in writing emphatically and precisely may be given to students in areas such as parallel construction, sentence fragments, transitional devices, use of the active voice, specific vocabulary, and sentence variety.

Reducing Writing Errors

When students write compositions under first-draft examination conditions, they make errors. Even though many students write rough drafts, some of them tend to transfer the rough draft errors to their revised copy. Helping English 33 students to be aware of the most frequent errors found in diploma examination writing may assist them in the revision process when they write their own diploma examinations.

The most common sentence errors are sentence fragments and comma splices. Some students are unsure about what constitutes a sentence, so they tend to run two separate principal clauses into one sentence. Subordinate clauses also cause some difficulty, especially those beginning with "which" or "that." These clauses appear to be tacked on to the rest of the sentence so that the sentence becomes overly long and unfocused. Many students have problems with verb tenses and the agreement between subject and verb and between pronoun and antecedent. Homonyms and apostrophes seem to confuse many students and result in such errors as "they're" for "there" and "your" for "you're." The apostrophe to show possession is often omitted or it may be incorrectly inserted into the plural form of a noun. The frequent use of "of" instead of "have" suggests that some students write what they hear: "could of/might of" instead of "could have/might have." Possibly the most frequently occurring spelling error is "alot." Some of these errors might be eliminated through improving dictionary and proofreading skills. It is essential, however, for all students to understand that the conventions of written language are different from, and more rigid than, the conventions of spoken language.

Awareness of the types of difficulties some students have and recognition of the techniques competent writers use is of value to both teachers and students. They share a common goa' –to have students reach their maximum potential—and appreciating the value of editing and proofreading may assist greatly in achieving that goal.

APPENDIX A

ENGLISH 33 WRITTEN-RESPONSE ASSIGNMENTS

JUNE 1991

SECTION I: PERSONAL RESPONSE TO LITERATURE
(Suggested time: 75 minutes)

Read the excerpt from the short story "Dry Storm" and complete the assignment that follows.

from DRY STORM

JACK STETTLER *was riding his horse hard across barren ranchland in central British Columbia, when his horse had a heart attack and fell on him.* STETTLER's *leg was sprained and his shoulder broken.*

STETTLER, *who lives alone, knows that his absence might go unnoticed for a week or a month. He has made camp for the second night, trying to find his way to his neighbor's ranch.*

The stars came out during the night and it froze.

At dawn, Jack Stettler broke ice in his boothole[1] to drink again.

Since there was a dawn in the clear air he could take direction. To the south, he knew, he must cut creeks, trails or tracks. He walked due west for half a mile to place himself beyond the edge of the nameless muskeg and then, carefully placing one foot in front of the other, began to walk south. His stomach ached from hunger and he was now very tired. His odds, he felt, had dropped again. They were now no better than even money.

He counted as he walked. Five hundred paces slow walk. Five hundred paces fast. Two hundred paces at a trot. At the end of each sequence he leaned against a tree, breathing deeply and did not move again until the freezing air penetrated and he was near to shivering.

Moving slowly, he detoured from time to time around small swamps and deadfall or thick, second-growth pines. He made for the south.

The sky clouded again and light, fine snow began falling, but before this took away his sun, he had hit the edge of a large opening, rimmed with the sharp spires of a thousand spruces and recognized that he had hit the Ildash.

The Ildash he knew. It was a region of swamp, meadow and forest which made a patchwork triangle north of the ranches of Frenchie and Smith. By bearing right, he should find Frenchie's creek.

What he could not estimate was the energy that remained in his body to walk those miles.

Without a broken shoulder, or in milder airs or with better boots, he might have been able to travel for days. But his was a small body. The energy reserves were scant. He had, he knew, used a lot of that treasure and he did not know how much remained. There was no longer any pain. The brain had long since manufactured enough endorphins to cancel out all the agony of the broken shoulder and, with it, all the bobwire cramps that go with prolonged hunger.

But the lack of food had cost him heavily. He knew that. His body's meager supply

Continued

[1]boothole — a hole in the ice made by using the heel of a boot

of fat had quickly been burned away and he was burning calories from muscle tissue.

He now calculated his chances as being no better than one in four.

Stettler trotted, he walked, he stood, he walked, he trotted and he stood again, and the easy snow came down upon him. He did not let himself sweat, and his thoughts, encased as he was within a soft white world of a few hundred feet visibility, remained essentially tranquil. He knew only that one more walk, one more trot, would bring him to a trail, a fence, a wagon road, which would border on Frenchie's place.

At the end of more than four hours he finally found something familiar, although it took a minute or more for him to adjust his mind to what he saw. It was the embers of his own campfire. "I'll be damned," he said. It was his only comment. Stettler was not a complaining man.

He again started walking, again making south as he could best perceive it to be. He shambled, lurched and sometimes fell but never wavered in his purpose nor, as he imagined it, lost his capacity for calm, rational and logical thought.

Paul St. Pierre,
Contemporary Western Canadian writer

THE ASSIGNMENT

We show what we are like by the ways in which we deal with difficult situations in life. In the excerpt from "Dry Storm," Stettler's character is revealed through the way in which he deals with his situation.

WHAT CHARACTER TRAITS HAVE YOU OBSERVED IN PEOPLE WHO ARE FACED WITH DIFFICULT SITUATIONS?

In your writing, you should

- consider Stettler's response to his situation
- use your own observations and/or experiences

You may also refer to other literature you have studied.

Present your ideas in PROSE.

Pages are provided for planning and drafting and for your revised work.

SECTION II: FUNCTIONAL WRITING
(Suggested time: 45 minutes)

Read the information below and complete the assignment that follows.

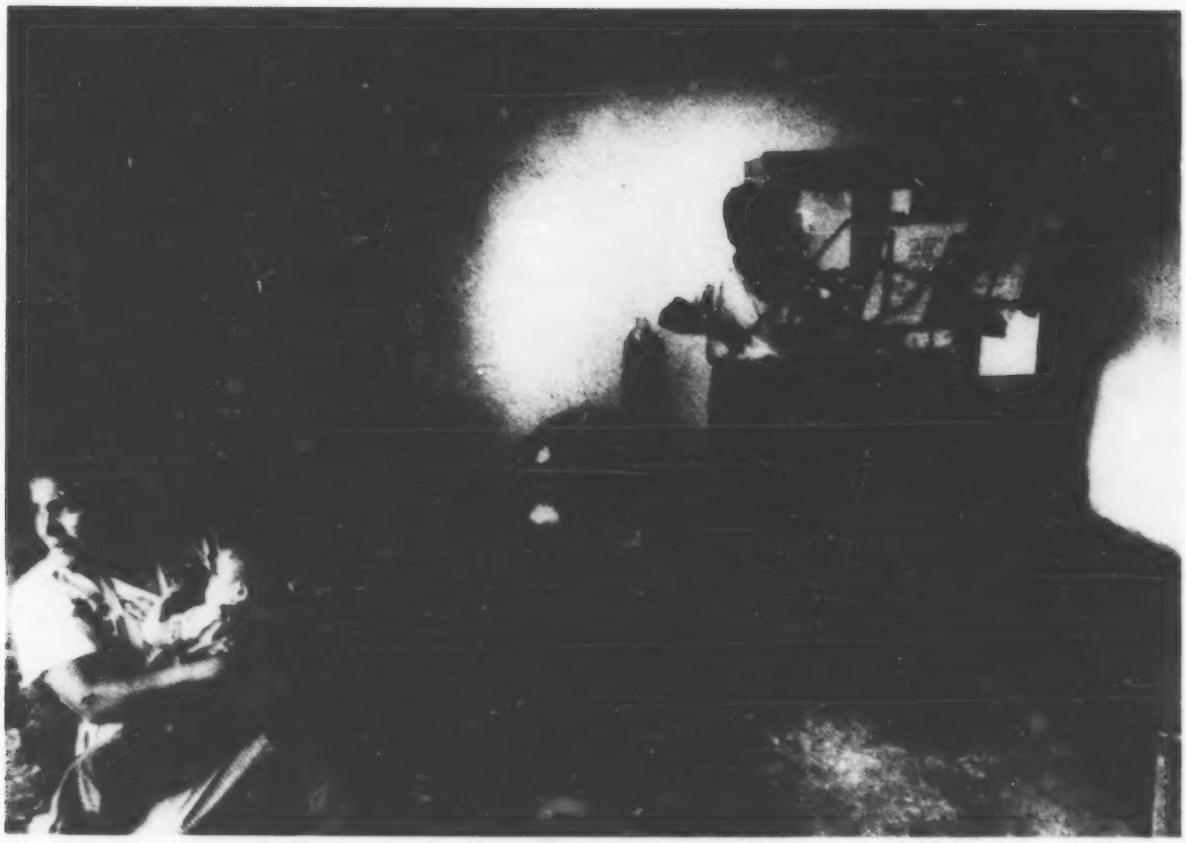
The following advertisement appeared in the classified section under HELP WANTED in the Thursday, June 6, 1991, edition of the *Nalwen News*.

> **U-SAVE RENT-A-CAR** — an Equal Opportunity Employer is establishing a new office in Nalwen. Several part-time and full-time openings are available for the right applicants. Applicants must be alert, personable, self-motivated, and capable of working without supervision.
>
> - **COUNTER PERSONS** require good telephone skills and the ability to deal well with people. Computer experience and typing would be an asset.
> - **BOOKKEEPING/ACCOUNTS PERSONS** require accounting skills, some computer experience, and organizational skills.
> - **VEHICLE MAINTENANCE PERSONS** must have a strong mechanical aptitude and must have completed courses in basic automotives.
> - **CAR VALETS** for the pick-up and delivery of vehicles require a valid driver's licence.
>
> On-the-job training will be provided. All applicants must be prepared to do shift work. U-SAVE provides a competitive wage scale and a comprehensive benefits package.
>
> Apply in writing, stating what you believe qualifies you for one of these positions, to Ms. Cynthia Melnyk, Personnel Manager, U-Save Rent-a-Car, Box 1172, Nalwen, Alberta T5J 4T3.

THE ASSIGNMENT

In the space provided, write a letter of application for ONE of the positions described above.

PLEASE NOTE: Letter format has been provided beginning on page 15.
Sign your letter PAT JONES.



SECTION III: RESPONSE TO VISUAL COMMUNICATION
(Suggested time: 30 minutes)

Examine the photograph on page 22 and complete the assignment below.

THE ASSIGNMENT

What idea(s) does the photographer communicate with this photograph? Explain how the details in the photograph and the photographer's choices reinforce the idea(s).

APPENDIX B

ENGLISH 33 SCORING GUIDES

JUNE 1991

Section I: Personal Response to Literature—Scoring Guide

It is important to recognize that student responses to the Personal Response Assignment will vary from writing that treats personal views and ideas analytically and rather formally to writing that explores ideas experimentally and informally. Consequently, evaluation of the personal response on the diploma examination will be in the context of Louise Rosenblatt's suggestion:

> The evaluation of the answer would be in terms of the amount of evidence that the [student] has actually read something and thought about it, not a question of whether necessarily he has thought about it in the way an adult would, or given an adult's "correct" answer.[1]

Thought and Detail (curriculum concepts 1, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 12)

When marking **Thought and Detail**, the marker should consider how effectively
- the assignment is addressed
- the detail supports and/or clarifies the response

5 **EXCELLENT**: An insightful understanding of the reading selection(s) is effectively established. The student's opinion, whether directly stated or implied, is perceptive and is appropriately supported by specific details. Support is precise and thoughtfully selected.

4 **PROFICIENT**: A well-considered understanding of the reading selection(s) is appropriately established. The student's opinion, whether directly stated or implied, is thoughtful and is supported by details. Support is well-defined and appropriate.

3 **SATISFACTORY**: A plausible understanding of the reading selection(s) is clearly established and sustained. The student's opinion, whether directly stated or implied, is conventional but is plausibly supported. Support is general but functional.

2 **LIMITED**: Some understanding of the reading selection(s) is evident, but the understanding is not always defensible or sustained. The student's opinion may be superficial, and support is scant and/or vague and/or redundant.

1 **POOR**: An implausible conjecture concerning the reading selection(s) is indicated. The student's opinion, if present, is inappropriate or incomprehensible. Support is inappropriate or absent.

INS **INSUFFICIENT**: The marker can discern no evidence of an attempt to fulfil the assignment, or the writing is so deficient in length that it is not possible to assess thought and detail.

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[1]Rosenblatt, Louise. "The Reader's Contribution in the Literary Experience." An interview with Lionel Wilson in *The English Quarterly 1* (Spring, 1981): 3–12.

Section I: Personal Response to Literature—Scoring Guide (continued)

Organization (curriculum concepts 2, 3, 4)

When marking **Organization**, the marker should consider how effectively the writing demonstrates

- unified and consistent development
- clear and coherent order

5 **EXCELLENT**: The beginning is constructed to provide direction for the reader and/or to encourage further reading. The ideas and situations are developed by sentences and paragraphs that flow smoothly and coherently to an appropriate and effective conclusion.

4 **PROFICIENT**: The beginning is constructed to provide direction for the reader. The ideas and situations are developed by sentences and paragraphs that are coherently related. The conclusion is appropriate.

3 **SATISFACTORY**: The beginning, development, and conclusion are functional. Sentences and paragraphs are generally related, but coherence may falter on occasion.

2 **LIMITED**: The beginning and/or conclusion are nonfunctional. Relationships between sentences and between paragraphs are frequently unclear.

1 **POOR**: The beginning is vague and/or unfocused. The conclusion, if present, is vague and/or unfocused. Sentences and paragraphs are not coherently related.

Matters of Choice (curriculum concepts 3, 4)

When marking **Matters of Choice**, the marker should consider the extent to which the writing demonstrates effectiveness of

- diction, including connotative language, imagery, idiomatic expressions, dialect
- syntax, including such choices as parallelism, balance, inversion, sentence length and variety

5 **EXCELLENT**: Choices evident in the writing are usually effective and sometimes polished. In many instances, words are chosen for effect. Diction is appropriate and specific. Many sentences are purposefully structured for effect.

4 **PROFICIENT**: Choices evident in the writing are often effective. Frequently, words are chosen for effect. Diction is appropriate. Some sentences are purposefully structured for effect.

3 **SATISFACTORY**: Choices evident in the writing are occasionally effective. Now and then, words appear to be chosen for effect. Diction is appropriate but may be overgeneralized. Attempts are made to structure sentences for effect.

2 **LIMITED**: Choices evident in the writing are often ineffective. Diction is imprecise and/or inappropriate. The writer demonstrates a lack of awareness of the choices that are available.

1 **POOR**: Choices evident in the writing are usually ineffective. Words and structures are misused to such an extent that clarity suffers. Diction is inaccurate and/or vague.

Section I: Personal Response to Literature—Scoring Guide (continued)

Matters of Convention (curriculum concepts 3, 4)

When marking **Matters of Convention**, the marker should examine the writing for correctness of

- mechanics (spelling, punctuation, capitalization, indentation, etc.)
- grammar (agreement of subject-verb/pronoun-antecedent, pronoun reference, etc.)

PROPORTION OF ERROR TO LENGTH AND COMPLEXITY OF RESPONSE MUST ALSO BE CONSIDERED.

5 **EXCELLENT**: The writing is essentially free from errors in mechanics and grammar. Errors that may be present do not reduce the clarity of communication.

4 **PROFICIENT**: Few errors in mechanics and grammar are present. These errors seldom reduce the clarity of communication.

3 **SATISFACTORY**: Occasional errors in mechanics and grammar are present. Some of these errors may reduce the clarity of communication.

2 **LIMITED**: Frequent errors in mechanics and grammar are present. Many of these errors reduce the clarity of communication.

1 **POOR**: Numerous errors in mechanics and grammar are both noticeable and jarring. Most of these errors severely reduce the clarity of communication.

Thought and Detail (curriculum concepts 1, 3, 4, 5)

When marking **Thought and Detail**, the marker should consider
- how well the assignment is addressed and whether the purpose specified in the assignment is fulfilled
- awareness of audience/appropriateness of tone (in terms of purpose)

5 **EXCELLENT**: A precise awareness of audience is demonstrated. Tone is appropriate. Significant information is presented, and this information is enhanced by precise and appropriate details that effectively fulfil the purpose.

4 **PROFICIENT**: A clear awareness of the audience is demonstrated. Tone is appropriate. Significant information is presented, and this information is substantiated by appropriate details that efficiently fulfil the purpose.

3 **SATISFACTORY**: A general awareness of audience is demonstrated. Tone is appropriate. Sufficient information is presented, and this information is supported by enough detail to fulfil the purpose.

2 **LIMITED**: Recognition of audience is demonstrated but is not sustained. Tone may be inappropriate. Essential information may be missing. Supporting details are scant, insignificant, and/or irrelevant. The purpose is only partially fulfilled.

1 **POOR**: Only a vague recognition of audience is demonstrated. Tone may be inappropriate. Essential information and supporting details are inappropriate or lacking. The purpose is not fulfilled.

INS **INSUFFICIENT**: The marker can discern no evidence of an attempt to fulfil the assignment, or the writing is so deficient in length that it is not possible to assess thought and detail.

Organization (curriculum concepts 2, 3, 4)

When marking **Organization**, the marker should consider how effectively the writing demonstrates

- clear and logical ordering of information
- unified ideas
- sustained coherence
- logical sequence of paragraphs

5 **EXCELLENT**: A clearly focused statement of topic or function is presented. Details are coherently related and are developed in sentences and paragraphs that flow smoothly to an effective and appropriate request, statement of expectation, or other conclusion.

4 **PROFICIENT**: A well-defined statement of topic or function is presented. Details are clearly related and are developed in sentences and paragraphs that culminate in an appropriate request, statement of expectation, or other conclusion.

3 **SATISFACTORY**: A general statement of topic or function is presented. Details are generally related, but coherence may falter on occasion. The request, statement of expectation, or other conclusion is mechanically presented.

2 **LIMITED**: A vaguely focused statement of topic or function is presented. Details are vaguely related. The request, statement of expectation, or other conclusion is unclear or absent.

1 **POOR**: The statement of topic or function, if present, is obscure. Details are not coherently related. The request, statement of expectation, or other conclusion is inappropriate or absent.

Writing Skills (curriculum concepts 2, 3, 4, 5)

When marking **Writing Skills**, the marker should consider Matters of Choice **AND** Matters of Convention.

PROPORTION OF ERROR TO LENGTH AND COMPLEXITY OF RESPONSE MUST ALSO BE CONSIDERED.

5 **EXCELLENT**: The selection and use of words and structures is, in most instances, effective. Errors in mechanics and grammar that may be present do not reduce the clarity of communication.

4 **PROFICIENT**: The selection and use of words and structures is frequently effective. Errors in mechanics and grammar seldom reduce the clarity of communication.

3 **SATISFACTORY**: The selection and use of words and structures is occasionally effective. Errors in mechanics and grammar occasionally reduce the clarity of communication.

2 **LIMITED**: The selection and use of words and structures is often ineffective. Errors in mechanics and grammar often reduce the clarity of communication.

1 **POOR**: The selection and use of words and structures is usually ineffective. Errors in mechanics and grammar severely reduce the clarity of communication.

Thought and Detail (curriculum concepts 1, 3, 4, 5, 13, 14, 16, 17)

When marking **Thought and Detail**, the marker should consider how effectively the details selected from the photograph and the discussion of these details contribute to a plausible and consistent interpretation of the photograph.

5 **EXCELLENT**: Interpretation of the photograph is insightful and is in the form of an effective generalized idea or theme. Specific details used for support are purposefully chosen and enhance clarity.

4 **PROFICIENT**: Interpretation of the photograph is well-considered and is in the form of a generalized idea or theme. Specific details used for support are well-defined and accurate.

3 **SATISFACTORY**: Interpretation of the photograph is conventional and may be in the form of a maxim or moral. Details used for support are clear but tend to be generalized.

2 **LIMITED**: Interpretation of the photograph is vague and uncertain and/or concentrated on a particular detail rather than on the photograph as a whole. Details used for support are inappropriate and/or unclear.

1 **POOR**: Interpretation of the photograph is inappropriate or incomprehensible. Details are irrelevant, inaccurate, or absent.

INS **INSUFFICIENT**: The marker can discern no evidence of an attempt to fulfil the assignment, or the writing is so deficient in length that it is not possible to assess thought and detail.

Organization (curriculum concepts 2, 3, 4)

When marking **Organization**, the marker should consider how effectively the writing demonstrates

- unified and consistent development
- clear and coherent order

5 **EXCELLENT**: A controlling idea is clear and successfully sustained. Ideas are developed by sentences and paragraphs that flow smoothly and coherently.

4 **PROFICIENT**: A controlling idea is clear and usually sustained. Ideas are developed by sentences and paragraphs that are coherently related.

3 **SATISFACTORY**: A controlling idea is mechanically maintained. Sentences and paragraphs are generally related, but coherence may falter on occasion.

2 **LIMITED**: A controlling idea may be lacking or not maintained. Relationships between sentences and between paragraphs are frequently unclear.

1 **POOR**: A controlling idea is lacking. Sentences and paragraphs are not coherently related.

Section III: Response to Visual Communication—Scoring Guide (continued)

Writing Skills (curriculum concepts 2, 3, 4, 5)

When marking **Writing Skills**, the marker should consider Matters of Choice **AND** Matters of Convention.

PROPORTION OF ERROR TO LENGTH AND COMPLEXITY OF RESPONSE MUST ALSO BE CONSIDERED.

5 **EXCELLENT**: The selection and use of words and structures is, in most instances, effective. Errors in mechanics and grammar that may be present do not reduce the clarity of communication.

4 **PROFICIENT**: The selection and use of words and structures is frequently effective. Errors in mechanics and grammar seldom reduce the clarity of communication.

3 **SATISFACTORY**: The selection and use of words and structures is occasionally effective. Errors in mechanics and grammar occasionally reduce the clarity of communication.

2 **LIMITED**: The selection and use of words and structures is often ineffective. Errors in mechanics and grammar often reduce the clarity of communication.

1 **POOR**: The selection and use of words and structures is usually ineffective. Errors in mechanics and grammar severely reduce the clarity of communication.